

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

AUGUST 1944

No. 84

it is hoped will contain

"From An Italian Diary"

By HOWARD CLEWES

Continued **"Rough Notes" (1809-15)**

By Sjt. J. S. COOPER

A New Story

"Heaven"

By DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON

and selections from new work by

VERNON WATKINS

MONICA STIRLING

BRYHER

J. F. HENDRY

etc.

Published Mid-Month **1/-** Price Unchanged

Please Order from all Booksellers, Newsagents, or direct from—

Brendin Publishing Company, Ltd.,

430 Strand, London, W.C.2.

CONTINUING
**THE LONDON
MERCURY**

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

VOL. 42 CONTENTS NO. 83

EDITORIAL

Campaigning with Cooper ; a Serjeant's Diary, 1809-15 1

ARTICLE

Publishing in Peace and War *Stanley Unwin* 5

STORY

Livvie *Eudora Welty* 30

POETRY

Seven New Poems *H. D.* 47

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

By *Gordon Bottomley, Trevor James, Bryher,*
Lambert Stone, etc. 52

The Editor is glad to consider MSS. though he cannot enter into correspondence over unsolicited contributions. No MS. will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Editorial Communications should be addressed to LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, 430 Strand, London, W.C. 2. The annual subscription is 14s. (post free), U.S.A. \$3.50.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

IN THE WORLD WAR

CAPT. NORMAN MACMILLAN, M.C., A.F.C.

Volume Two Ready July 13 12/6 net

This excellent history of operations continues with the Battles of Holland, Belgium, France, and Britain.



c/o Postmaster

A delectable book compounded of humour, serious comment and cartoons by Corporal **THOMAS ST GEORGE** of the U.S. Army, telling folks at home what he thought of Australia and the Australians. 8/6 net

— H A R R A P —

BOOKS AND THE COMMUNITY

Books are helping to fight the War and prepare for the peace.

What should be the place of books, and the book trade, in the post-war world? It is worth thinking about.

JOHN & EDWARD BUMPUS, LTD.

Booksellers to His Majesty The King

477 OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1

Mayfair 3601

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

VOL. 42 CONTENTS NO. 84

EDITORIAL

Campaigning with Cooper (1809-1815) (*Concluded*) 65

DIARY

From Italy *Howard Clewes* 78

TRANSLATIONS

Poems from Heine's "Nordsee" *Vernon Watkins* 88

STORIES

Haven *Dorothy M. Richardson* 97
We've All Got to Learn *Monica Stirling* 106

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

By *Robert Herring, Bryher, Morid Spalding, Alfred Perlès.* 113

The Editor is glad to consider MSS. though he cannot enter into correspondence over unsolicited contributions. No MS. will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Editorial Communications should be addressed to LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, 430 Strand, London, W.C. 2. The annual subscription is 14s. (post free), U.S.A. \$3.50.

New Zealand

A Working Democracy

WALTER NASH

The ties between Britain and New Zealand are very strong, for, of all the dominions and colonies, she is most like the mother country.

In some circles New Zealand is considered the social and economic laboratory of the world, but little is really known about the lives of the average citizens of that country, and the way they live and work.

Here, then, for the first time, British readers may get a complete picture of modern New Zealand—its men and resources, its history and life, the nation at war, and its hopes for the future.

8s. 6d. net

Milton:

Man & Thinker

DENIS SAURAT

First published in English in 1925, Professor Saurat's was the first full-scale attempt to present Milton's philosophy as a whole. Much of Milton's philosophy exists in Fludd's works, and in the contemporary sect of Moralists. This part of the original edition is now published for the first time in English.

'He can claim that Englishmen have a clearer picture of Milton as a result of his labours. It shows Milton as a human being, even if not always a lovable one. Witty, religious, full of courage and outspoken, Saurat has many of the qualities which make it easy for him to understand Milton.'—B. IFOR EVANS (*John O'London's Weekly*). 15s. net

DENT

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

VOL. 42	CONTENTS		NO. 85
EDITORIAL			125
ARTICLE			
	Triceratops and Pepper	<i>Bryher</i>	126
POEM			
	Song for a Hero	<i>George Bruce</i>	133
ARTICLE			
	Personal Notes on Franz Kafka	<i>John Urzidil</i>	134
TRANSLATIONS			
	Poems from Heine's "Die Nordsee"	<i>Vernon Watkins</i>	141
ARTICLE			
	A Consideration of Some Recent Younger Poetry	<i>Robert Herring</i>	147
POEM			
	Song	<i>May Sarton</i>	160
STORY			
	The Wild Duck	<i>Rumer Godden</i>	161
TWO POEMS			
	The Wanderer's Journey is Done	<i>Maurice Lindsay</i>	172
	To a Welsh Girl, Briefly Known	" "	172
STORY			
	The Dying Stallion	<i>Fred Urquhart</i>	173
REVIEWS OF BOOKS			
	By <i>Gordon Bottomley, Trevor James, Alfred Perlès,</i> <i>H. K. Fisher</i>		179

The Editor is glad to consider MSS. though he cannot enter into correspondence over unsolicited contributions. No MS. will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Editorial Communications should be addressed to LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, 430 Strand, London, W.C. 1. The annual subscription is 14s. (post free), U.S.A. \$3.50.



Bishop Berkeley's Philosophical Commentaries

generally called the *COMMONPLACE BOOK*

An *editio diplomatica* edited by A. A. LUCE, M.C., D.D., Litt.D.

"This magnificent work provides a definite text, with full explanatory notes, references, and indexes, to the MSS. usually known as Berkeley's *Commonplace Book*"—*Manchester Guardian*. "Students of Berkeley for many generations to come will be grateful to Professor Luce for this fine piece of work."—*Nature*. *Edition limited to 400 copies.*

Price 3½ guineas

HORRABIN'S Atlas-History

OF THE SECOND GREAT WAR

Vol. 9, Sept. 1943–April, 1944

With the ninth volume of his famous *Atlas History* Horrabin carries the story right up to the eve of Invasion 5s net

Night Bombing

FLT./LT. HECTOR HAWTON

Author of *The Men Who Fly*

Deals not with individual exploits but with Britain's night-bombing policy and the measures taken to overcome the enemy's defences 5s net

The Religious Background of the Bible

J. N. SCHOFIELD, M.A., B.D.

The author of *The Historical Background of the Bible* further enriches the reader's understanding by tracing the development of religious doctrine and practice as set forth in the Testaments 17s 6d. net

The Modern Greeks

A. R. BURN

This timely volume is written by an authority on ancient Greece who has served in the Middle East and so has been able to observe the Greeks of to-day, and now records their splendid valour. *Illustrated* 5s net

Principles of Physical Geology

PROFESSOR ARTHUR HOLMES

"Attractively produced and beautifully illustrated... Geologists and geographers will welcome it as an authoritative and up-to-date exposition of the principles underlying the study of one of the most fascinating branches of natural science. A pleasure to handle and a delight to read."—*Scotsman*.

With many plates, diagrams, and illustrations.

30s. net

Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd
Parkside . Edinburgh

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

JULY

EDITORIAL

1944

"INTO BOMB PROOF barracks again" wrote Serjeant Cooper, who referred also to rockets, to "large curiously built boats" and to "people mad with joy, waving handkerchiefs and scattering roses on the passing troops"—but the people were those of Oporto and the river up which he was conveyed in the boats was the Tagus, for he fought in the Peninsular campaigns and it is his diary from which I quote.

From the outset of his career, John Spencer Cooper used phrases which this war has again made familiar. Born in 1787, in June, 1806, he enlisted in the North York Militia. He joined that regiment at Portsmouth, next marched to Eastbourne. "To fill up the line regiments for foreign service," the Government then "gave leave for militia men to extend their service into the regular army", and he "volunteered into" the 2nd Battalion of the 7th Royal Fusiliers. He served in seven campaigns and what he calls the Rough Notes he made then were published in 1869 by John Russell Smith in London and by George Coward in Carlisle.

If it be thought that we have quite enough to do, to endure the terrors and tediums of our own wars without going back to consider others, I would demur. There is encouragement in reminding ourselves of what men have triumphed over, and though it may momentarily depress us to read, of last century, a familiar story of unpreparedness, poor food and small forces, there is consolation

too, in recognizing that if conditions recur, so does the spirit that conquers them. Serjeant Cooper is a figure so recognizable that instead of thinking to-day's men are like him, we feel he himself is contemporary.

His first battle is thus described: "the last day's march was really horrible. We had heavy knapsacks, sore feet and, after marching 20 or 30 miles, for a finish we ran, to get into action, about four miles to a town opposite Oporto, called Villa Nova." Next day, "We might have avoided many bad parts of the road but the General would not allow any break in the column, so through thick and thin both officers and men had to splash." This general appears to have been a martinet, for at Castello Branca he "made both officers and men wade through a river when there was a bridge within a hundred yards". He is the only superior who comes in for adverse criticism. Cooper's captain "was greatly beloved. As a man, he was handsome; as an officer, kind; as a soldier, brave and adventurous". As for Wellington, "Horsefall said 'Whar's ar Arthur? Ar wish he war here'. So did I."

Cooper also repudiates charges that the Duke was over-strict. "It has frequently been stated that the Duke of Wellington was severe. In answer to this, I would say he could not be otherwise. His army was composed of the lowest orders. Many, if not the most, were idle, ignorant and drunken. It is true the troops were ill supplied with provisions in the Peninsula; it is also true that they plundered when opportunity offered. But could a general so wise, just and brave as Wellington suffer the people, that he was sent to deliver from the tyrant, to be robbed with impunity? He could not; he did not. By the discipline he enforced, the British Army became more than a match, even at great odds, for the best of Napoleon's boasted legions."

Looking back half a century later, Cooper observes that

“soldiering at the present (i.e. 1869) is mere child’s play compared to what it was from 1800 to 1815. The military code is more in unison with humanity. Flogging is seldom heard of. The soldier’s treatment is quite different. He now has both breakfast and supper. He has no bright barrels, no hair to tie or powder. In short, he is now cared for as a man.”

It is worth while considering what this “hair” entailed for a fighting-man. It was “tightly bound round a piece of lead behind. The hair on the sides was rubbed round till matted, then greased and powdered with flour. The whiskers were greased, set up and also powdered.” Round his neck “he wore a stock of stiff leather, four inches broad, well varnished . . . His jacket fitted far too tightly . . . his breeches were of white cloth . . . to be tolerably fit for parade required three hours work.” Nevertheless, in 1810, at Torres Vedras, although “we were not allowed during these wearisome six weeks to strip off either belts or clothes”, every regiment “was required to be on its respective parade ground an hour before daylight, in full marching order.”

The weight of kit carried was 53 pounds. “The government,” comments Cooper, “should also have issued us new backbones to bear the weight.” When provisions were carried, another 8 pounds was added. But often there were no provisions, and this is the main burden of Cooper’s *Rough Notes*. At Talavera, “nothing was served out to us from 2 or 3 p.m. on 27th July till about 10 a.m. on the 29th,” when they had 4 oz. of bread for the next 24 hours, making “6 or 8 decent mouthfuls”. On the retreat to Badajoz, “the commissary having no bread for us, we were marched into a newly reaped field of wheat, of which each man received a sheaf. Laughable it was to see hundreds of soldiers bearing away their burdens, but we could make little use of the corn, for want of the means of grinding it.”

Later, "no bread served out for six days. All we got was a pound of bad lean beef each day." On 11th March, 1811, he records with pleased gloom, "nothing to eat but boiled bean tops. The officers were as badly off as ourselves. The cause was, we had outmarched our stores." In consequence, a biscuit weighing three quarters of a pound would fetch 5s. Another consequence was "the cheapness of intoxicating drinks and the drunkenness of the men aggravated disease". The prevailing disorders were fever and dysentery. ("Half the army fell sick and during the following winter, I think our regiment lost 200 men.") The serjeant himself had both. "The sick not being then disposed of, I was laid down on the steps of a convent and left there, till removed by order of a surgeon. Relapse and insensibility were the result." He tells us that he had "three blisters on my back and feet unhealed and undressed; legs like ice; ears running stinking matter; my knapsack lost and, worst of all, no one to care a straw for me".

There was no Florence Nightingale in the Peninsula, though there were other women. "The orderlies (men who acted as nurses to the sick) were brutes." Cooper had four attacks of fever. On the last, he was sent off to hospital at Guarda, "but the place being crowded, I was placed in the dead house all night."

There we will leave him—not for good, for he lived to be over eighty; but because space forbids to recount his further experiences. As it does also, until next month, of his comrade Jack Styles, who refused to be parted from his leg, which "mended in a contracted state" or of the wife of a brother serjeant, who accompanied her husband for 3 or 4 years in the Peninsula. Being one day caught stealing, she was flogged. "After this, she left poor Bishop and went to live with Colonel E, of the — regiment."

(To be continued)

PUBLISHING IN PEACE AND WAR

Delivered, in abridged form, as a "Discourse" to The
Royal Institution

By STANLEY UNWIN

(Past President of the Publishers' Association of Great Britain and
Past President of the International Publishers' Congress.)

PUBLISHING, OR PERHAPS I ought to say, Book-Publishing, is quite different from what most people apparently suppose. The young man just down from Oxford or Cambridge who regards it as a pleasantly dilettante occupation suitable for someone who does not know what he wants to do but likes books, is under an illusion. If it is not a profession, it is as Mr. Raymond Mortimer aptly said, "at once an art, a craft, and a business," for which a curious and unusual combination of qualifications is desirable.

There is, of course, the literary background; the knowledge of the literature of the subject with which the publisher is dealing, and, equally important, where to turn for that knowledge. But something much more than knowledge is needed, namely judgment, and what for want of a better word I can only call "flair", in the selection of the MSS. to be published.

Then there is the technical knowledge of paper, printing, binding, blockmaking, etc., connected with the physical production of books—a knowledge which needs to be associated with taste.

But if the publisher is to do justice to the books he has selected and produced, he must finally be able to market them, not merely at home, but throughout the world. The publisher who is without knowledge of book trade organization and has no experience of the actual selling of books to the public (in a retail bookshop) and to booksellers (as a publisher's traveller) is gravely handicapped in gauging either trade requirements or the com-

mercial merits of MSS. Furthermore, just as an adequate knowledge of printing cannot be acquired without spending time in a printing works, a really effective knowledge of overseas markets cannot be acquired without visiting them.

Then there is a certain legal equipment which is almost indispensable—an ability to draft agreements—some knowledge of the law of copyright, which, surprising as it may sound, very, very few lawyers possess, and (otherwise you will pay for it dearly) some knowledge of the law of libel.

But I will not burden you with further qualifications. I will content myself with saying that although the fact is soon brought home to the publisher that with books he is dealing with the lively offspring of authors and no mere dead commodity, it is only perhaps after a wide experience of ten or fifteen years that he may fully understand how much there still is to learn about his pleasant but most exacting job.

It will, I think, help you to follow what book publishing involves, whether in war or peace, if I run through the whole process from the arrival of the MS. (or in these days it would be more correct to say typescript) to the happy day—happy if the book is successful—when it is on sale in the bookshops.

Let us assume that one of you has written a good book and that you were discreet enough to submit it to my firm. Whether you leave it furtively on our counter or entrust it to the postman, it will form part of the deluge of typescripts that descends upon us, in common with other publishers, day in day out through the year. But there is no need for any anxiety on that account. It will not be swamped. Each MS. lives its own individual life. It is first carefully recorded and acknowledged. What happens thereafter varies according to the nature of the MS. In our case practically every MS. is glanced at in

the first place by my nephew or myself, primarily in order to decide to which reader it shall go. Some firms have their readers on the premises; others find this work is better done in the country. Naturally, the biological MS. is sent to the biological expert and so on.

The reader is called upon to give a written report upon every MS., and these reports are filed with the relevant correspondence for easy reference.

Special attention is given by the better publishers to the work of beginners. If it shows promise but is not up to publication standard the wisest advice the publisher can give to the author may be to put the MS. aside for 6 months and then to read it again. Three months may suffice. Such advice is, however, seldom taken. Artists do not expect their first immature drawings to be immediately acquired by a gallery for permanent exhibition; but it is astonishing how many authors expect their prentice work to be immortalized and how few are prepared to exercise the patience of Robert Louis Stevenson. If they could be persuaded to wait until their books were good enough to be taken by a publisher of repute, instead of, as sometimes, paying a firm of no standing to rush them out, they themselves would benefit and much would be gained all round.

The illusion that publishers do *not* read MSS. and are *not* interested in the work of beginners persists in the most extraordinary way, but it is an illusion none the less. A supply of MSS. is the life-blood of a publishing business. The proportion, however, of those submitted which are publishable is painfully small. One in thirty is a generous estimate.¹ You will therefore appreciate that, though absolutely necessary, the careful reading of MSS. is a costly and troublesome business. If a work

¹ It must be remembered that the thirty include many previously read and declined by other publishers.

shows promise more than one opinion may be obtained because amongst so much rubbish and indifferent stuff a most mediocre manuscript may stand out unduly. Moreover publishers' readers, like doctors, may disagree and in such cases it falls to the publisher himself to give the casting vote.

The debt many authors owe to publishers' readers is seldom acknowledged. Under their advice MSS. are sometimes improved out of all knowledge. On the other hand they cannot, as some folks imagine, turn illiterate and worthless MSS. into literary masterpieces. The number of would-be authors who expect publishers to give them free tuition in the elements of their craft is astonishing.

But the work you have delivered is obviously a good one which we want to accept. What is more you have realized that a little time spent on the preparation of the typescript so that it is really ready for the printer will ensure a more favourable impression than any letter of introduction. We can therefore pass on to the next process which is known as casting-off and estimating.

"Casting-off," that is counting the precise number of words in a typescript and calculating how many pages it will make if printed in such and such a style, is a mechanical task calling for more technical skill than is usually realized. But just as an architect must make his plans before calling in the quantity surveyor, so a publisher must—mentally at any rate—design his book before proceeding further.

To-day, far more thought is given to design than thirty or forty years ago. The difference is startling. There is, for example, the striking improvement in type design, for which we owe so much to the far-sighted action of the Monotype Corporation in seeking and following the best advice. It is no more costly to set a book in a good fount of type than in a bad one and there is no longer any excuse for not using good type faces. (May I pause to say that

this applies not merely to books but to every form of printing, and to lettering on shop fronts and stores. There is no reason why the eye should ever be offended by bad lettering.) But the arrangement of the type page on the paper is also of the utmost importance. Note the difference between the appearance of a page with equal margins and one which is correctly imposed with the margin at the bottom approximately double that at the top as shown in the diagram (Fig. 1).

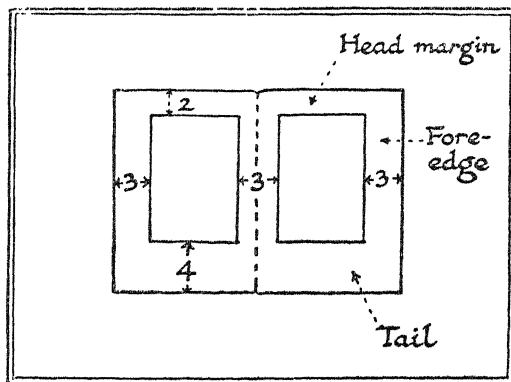


FIG. 1.

A book is held at the bottom or side, never at the top. Here we have another proof of the statement that "fitness for use" results in a pleasing appearance. As I have used the technical word "Imposed" perhaps I had better explain at once what imposition means, though it does not arise until the type has been set up.

You probably all know that books are printed in sections usually of 32, though possibly of 16 or 64 pages, but have you, I wonder, realized how complicated is the arrangement of these pages if they are to appear in the right order after the sheet has been folded, and how essential it is to know in advance *how* they are going to be folded? The arrange-

ment is quite different for hand folding and machine folding and in the case of large sheets is exceedingly complicated. If you take a piece of paper; fold it, say, four times; paginate it and then unfold it, you can easily study this particular problem for yourself.

Well, having decided in your mind's eye the kind of book we are planning, we can instruct the printer to set a specimen page of the size and in the fount of type we desire. Here we must remember that as the book is to be printed in 32 page sections it is important that the book when set should result in what is termed an even working, that is a multiple of 32. We must also in these days remember that formidable document, called the *Book Production War Economy Agreement*, which regulates the size of type that may be used, the minimum number of words to the square inch, the weight of paper, etc. The most cursory comparison of a typical pre-war page with fairly large type and generous margins, and a war economy page in smaller type, more closely set with narrow margins tells its own sad story.

But we must get back to the book we are producing. We usually show the specimen page to the author and send with it a questionnaire, the object of which is to help the author to avoid some of the many pitfalls which await the unwary and above all to keep to the minimum that nightmare of publishers—"authors' corrections." It is an expensive procedure to wait until the book is set up before ascertaining that your author feels that his happiness in life depends upon spelling words with "s" rather than "z" when both are equally admissible and the printer's house style is "z".

Surprising as it may sound there are authors who take it as personal affront if you print "judgment" without (or with) an "e" or have the wrong number of "t's" in "Matins".

Together with the specimen page we shall have received the printer's estimate and shall be in a position to arrive at the first cost of the book, which represents the basis upon which the published price is, or at any rate ought to be, fixed. It is usually about $3\frac{1}{2}$ times the cost of the production. (In America at least 5 times.) Exactly how that is arrived at I have shown in detail in a pamphlet entitled "The Price of Books".

If Initial cost of typesetting = £100			
<hr/>			
the cost of this item per copy =			
<hr/>			
If 1 copy is printed is		£100	
10 copies are printed		£10	
100 " " "		£1	
1000 " " "		2/	
10,000 " " "		$2\frac{1}{2}^p$	
100,000 " " "		$\frac{1}{4}^p$	

FIG. 2.

Now, obvious as it would seem to be, it is often difficult to get authors to grasp the fact that the author's royalty and the publisher's profit (if any) have to come from the margin between what the book costs to produce, sell, and advertise, and the amount per copy received by the publisher from the bookseller. This margin determines what royalty the publisher can pay. Beyond a certain and quickly reached point an increased margin can be achieved only by skimping the production or charging an excessive price. At this point I must pause to interpolate a fact seldom realized, namely that the cost per copy depends

more largely upon the size of the edition than upon any other single factor. This will be readily understood if I mention that the cost of setting up the type and the making of the blocks of the illustrations remains the same whether 100, 1,000 or 10,000 copies are struck off (Fig. 2).

Any books for which there is for one reason or another a restricted market will of necessity for this reason appear expensive compared with a mass-produced article.

Now that he knows his costs the publisher is in a position to make an agreement with the author. Fifty years ago it was a very simple document conveying entire rights for a lump sum such as Oscar Wilde's agreement for *The Importance of being Earnest*, but a most unsatisfactory one from the author's point of view. To-day the author's interests are more fully protected and you have an elaborate document carefully defining the respective rights and interests of author and publisher and covering all the many points which may arise. Agreements between authors and publishers are of four kinds.

1. The outright sale of the copyright, which may prove an exceedingly bad arrangement for the author and is almost certain to be for the publisher.¹ The method is seldom used nowadays.

2. The Royalty agreement under which a percentage on the published price is paid to the author on all copies sold. This is both the fairest and commonest arrangement.

3. The Profit-sharing agreement under which the out-of-pocket expenditure on paper, printing, binding, etc., is a first charge on the receipts from sales, and thereafter when the costs are covered the gross receipts are divided between the author and publisher.

This method, though now seldom used, is not without

¹ If the book is a failure the publisher will get no sympathy, let alone a refund of any excess payment from the author; on the other hand if the book is a success the author is almost certain to denounce the iniquity of such an arrangement and clamour for royalties.

its merits in connection with some forms of long-term publishing.

4. Publishing at the author's expense, usually called "Commission Publishing", because the publisher charges a commission for his services. It leaves the actual stock of the book as well as the rights the property of the author. It is not an attractive arrangement to publishers because the commission rarely covers their full overhead expenses.

Authors now have what Mr. Bernard Shaw rightly calls their "Trade Union"—The Society of Authors—and are well looked after. But it does not, and cannot (alas!) ensure that the author's remuneration has any relation to the intrinsic merits of his work. The author of a learned historical or scientific book which is a real contribution to knowledge will probably be as underpaid as the author of some ephemeral best-seller will be overpaid, and for that state of affairs it is the public and neither the publishers nor the Authors' Society that is ultimately responsible.

Fortunately the authors of learned works may sometimes be rewarded in other ways, as I was reminded by a Professor of Philosophy, the sales of whose masterpiece had taken thirty years to cover the printing bill. The day after he had received a cheque in respect of "profits" he called to tell me that it was an amusing coincidence that the first payment should have reached him on the very day of his retirement from the professorship the publication of the book had secured him. The patient publisher had been out of pocket for thirty years without any comparable recognition of his part in such uncommercial activities.

Immediately the agreement is signed the publisher is in a position to instruct the printer to proceed, and to send to all his travellers particulars of the new book in the form of a descriptive paragraph or blurb. Advance information of this kind is essential if representatives at distant points such as New Zealand are to be enabled to get orders in time for

supply on the day of publication. The circulation of these slips to all the departments of our business ; all our representatives ; our more important customers and others interested in literary news set in motion a whole chain of activities to some of which I shall refer later.

Meanwhile we must follow the typescript to the printers. In my early days it would have been hand-set. To-day a Monotype machine is almost certain to be used. It is in two parts. The first, like a large typewriter, punches holes in a roll of paper. In the second machine the roll is unwound and acting upon the pianola principle casts individual pieces of type for each letter and space, and quite uncannily, in fact almost miraculously, arranges them in correctly spaced lines. First proofs are sometimes pulled at this stage, when the type is in long strips called galleys. To the breaking up into pages and their subsequent imposition in the metal frames in which they will be printed I have already referred but I have not mentioned the possibility of the inclusion of illustrations.

There are many methods of reproducing illustrations but I must here confine myself to the two most commonly used, viz. line and half-tone. The great advantage of the line process is not only that it is cheaper, but that it does not necessitate the use of the ultra glossy "art" paper (loaded with china clay) which the half-tone process usually involves. Assuming that you have written a scientific work it is probable that the illustrations will be line drawings suitable for reproduction in the text. A new standard has recently been set in the illustration of scientific text-books, and this we owe to the happy collaboration of a scientist and artist. Their technique is to make the diagram self-contained ; there is no need to refer back to the text for explanations. This can be seen for example by comparing a drawing of the Star Triangle from a standard college text-book on astronomy with the drawing of the same subject

in Lancelot Hogben's *Science for the Citizen*. This new style calls for the fullest collaboration between author and artist.

Probably, however, one of the illustrations it is desired to include is a photograph, which because of the intermediate tones cannot be reproduced by the line process. The half-tone process solves this problem by the use of a screen. If you look through a magnifying glass at an illustration printed on glossy paper you will probably find that it consists of dots of varying size and density. This method is often used for illustrations in colour, and in *The Truth about Publishing* I reproduced a miniature illustration printed in the three primary colours, and a small portion of the same illustration greatly magnified.

One of the most important parts of the type setting is the arrangement of the "prelims" as the preliminary pages are called. The "lay-out" of this part of the book and particularly of the title-page often calls for considerable typographical skill. A glance through the prelims of a book at once reveals whether or not an expert has been at work.

However many pages the printed sheets contain they are usually cut and folded in sections of 16 pages. You can see this for yourself by looking at the top or bottom of a book near the rounded back. Now these sections have to be gathered together, or "collated" as we say, before they can be sewn, and to facilitate this two things are done. The sections are lettered alphabetically at the beginning of each section. Look, for example, at pages 33, 49, or 65 of a book and you will usually find a stray letter or "signature" at the foot. But in gathering these signatures, as the sections are called, it is easy to pick up two of the same sections or to miss one out in view of the speed with which the work is done. You would then have an imperfect book. In mass production an occasional imperfect book is inevitable.

Don't worry if you get one, because every publisher will exchange it for a perfect copy without question, and usually refund the postage incurred in returning it. These imperfections would occur far more frequently but for an ingenious method of marking each signature at the point where the outside fold comes. If a signature has been missed the omission automatically reveals itself.

Proofs of a book are needed for many purposes besides correction by the author. They are urgently wanted by the publishers' travellers all over the world, and for them to pass on to their customers, the booksellers. They may be needed to show to American and foreign publishers in connection with the sale of the American and translation rights, or wanted by the artist who is designing the jacket, and last but not least, for the publisher to look through himself and possibly pass on to a lawyer to vet for libel.

I cannot leave the proof stage without paying a tribute to book printers' readers, without whose watchful care and encyclopædic knowledge many an author might slip up badly.

We now come to the question of paper, which deserves a discourse to itself. Although the government does not always seem alive to the fact, you will appreciate, like every publisher, that books cannot be made without paper. In pre-war days the most important ingredient of the paper used in better class books was esparto grass from North Africa; to-day it is straw. It is only the paper of quite cheap books which, like newsprint, is made exclusively from wood-pulp. Naturally we are looking forward to a return to esparto because it makes a better quality and probably more enduring paper, but I hope we shall not return to pre-war bulk. For some quite inexplicable reason the public in pre-war days measured the value of books by its bulk. If one listened to one's travellers and a certain type of bookseller, one would be led to believe

that the cubic measurements of a book were more important than its literary contents. The identical book which was "poor value" when it bulked $\frac{1}{2}$ inch became "good value" when it was printed on fluffy paper which bulked an inch, and the sad or amusing thing about it—take your choice which—is that the chief difference between these two books is the amount of air left in the fluffy paper. It is rather like saying that the white of an egg is better value when beaten up because it occupies so much more space. A firm, well rolled, paper can be bound more securely, will last longer and is in every way better than a fluffy one, and I hope that none of you will be misled into thinking that unnecessary bulk gives a book added value, but that on the contrary you will recognize it for what it is—a positive disadvantage and a sham.

The actual printing of the sheets of a book—the "machining" as we should say—is usually carried out on a "flat bed" machine (i.e. the type is on a flat surface) but when mass editions are being produced a rotary press is used. The "making ready" necessary to ensure even printing is a laborious process if conscientiously done, and it is here and in the quality of the ink that the cheap printer is apt to economize.

Machinery plays an ever increasing role in binding, particularly where large quantities are concerned. The difference in cost between paper and cloth binding is almost invariably exaggerated. Of course if you are binding a single copy the difference is proportionately great. But with mass production the folding, collating, and sewing of the sheets remains the same with both paper and cloth binding. There remains the actual case, which a case-making machine produces at an incredible speed. With most ordinary crown 8vo books the extra cost of "casing" would be about 4*d.* which means an additional 1*s.* on the published price, and experiment has proved, over and over

again, that unless the book is published at 1s. or less, the public prefers to pay an extra 2s. if need be to have a book in a cloth binding.

To-day practically every cloth-bound book has a specially printed "jacket". The evolution of this "dust cover", because that is precisely what it is, would take too long to describe. People who talk as if jackets were an unnecessary innovation overlook the fact that some form of protection is essential. Fifty years ago it often took the form of plain paper, waste printed sheets or glassine. Then for convenience, the name was printed on the shelf-back or side; then on both. Some descriptive matter was subsequently added, and later, illustrations. The question is not whether we can do without a dust cover but whether it shall be dull or decorative—uninteresting or utilized to give information. A mere protection from dust or an attractive and integral part of the book.

I have hurried through the various stages of "production" because it is not until the book is in being that the work of the publisher as defined by the dictionary, namely "to make public" really begins. At this point the practices of different publishing houses vary, largely according to the character of their respective businesses. Practically all employ travellers to show their products to the booksellers both at home and overseas. And all send review copies of their publications to the leading newspapers and journals in time for notice on the day of issue. But a publisher concentrating largely on fiction would not record his sales or the results of his distribution of review copies as, for example, we do. We analyse all our sales, and could tell you at any time the destination of every copy of a book. This is most helpful when we come to publish another book by the same author or on the same subject. We have been able to surprise booksellers sometimes by telling them how many more copies of a book they had

sold than they had ever realized. Similarly with review copies our statistical index shows us not only which papers reviewed a particular book but the record of each newspaper and periodical. It enabled us not many months ago to expose an apparently reputable journal which consistently applied for review copies and as consistently refrained

COST of one inch (single column) advertisement
in a typical Sunday newspaper

In 1885	5/ per inch
1913	15/ " "
1939	£2/10/ " "
1944	£7/·/· " "

The COST of an eight inch double
column advertisement is

∴ £112

in a single issue of the newspaper

•

§ PROBLEM How many copies of the book must be
sold as the result of such an advertisement to make
it profitable?

FIG. 3.

from reviewing them, though not I imagine from selling them.

Advertising practice varies enormously. There are those who rely almost exclusively upon two Sunday papers; there are others who feel that *The Times* (daily and weekly), *The Times Literary Supplement*, the weekly political journals, and some of the leading provincial papers are equally important. Here, too, there have been startling changes both in the typographical arrangement of advertisements and in their cost. In *Best Sellers: Are they Born or*

Made (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.) I have shown a typical advertisement of twenty years ago compared with a modern lay-out. The cost (Fig. 3) per inch has increased from 5s. in 1885; 15s. in 1913; £2 10s. in 1939 to £7 now. With some businesses circularizing is the chief feature. Above all, the important thing is to get a book talked about, and any method which achieves that end is sound. In war-time advertising space is strictly rationed and paper for circularizing is restricted to 15 per cent. of pre-war usage. But the curious thing is that though they are advertised less, the demand for books is greater than it has ever been before. The war has turned publishing completely topsy-turvy.

Normally the demand is quite unequal to the supply; to-day the supply is quite unequal to the demand. There is something more than ironical in the fact that at the moment when, for the first time the public is clamouring not merely for books but for good books, most of the good books are unobtainable or in short supply. If there were any real need for this there would be nothing further to be said. But in relation to the national effort the amount of labour and materials involved in book manufacture is negligible. Few people realize that about seventy firms of printers and bookbinders are responsible for every 90 per cent. of the book production. Had the personnel of these seventy been granted a little more protection (and the numbers involved are very small) there need have been no difficulty about output. But I mean protection and not what is sometimes described as substitution. One substitute for a Binder's warehouseman who knew the stock position of some thousands of books was discovered to be willing beyond many but *completely unable to read!*

As for paper, the total amount allowed to established book-publishers including the recent 2½ per cent. increase is less than 22,000 tons per annum. Yes, I mean it, only

22,000 tons for all the established firms put together. Here are the figures:—

PAPER RATIONING

	<u>TONS</u>
Newspapers	250,000
H.M. Stationery Office	100,000
Periodicals	nearly 50,000
War Office <i>(included in HMSO quota)</i>	25,000
Books <i>(including the extra 2½%)</i>	less than 22,000
<hr/>	
American Book Publishers quota for 1943 was	128,000

FIG. 4.

And yet in face of the above there are responsible officials who claim that books have been very generously treated because, forsooth, *on a percentage basis* book publishers are favoured. (What should we think of a Ministry of Food which boasted that *on a percentage basis* it had not reduced the diet of previously under-nourished people by quite as large a percentage as the over-fed?) This typical way in which officialdom looks at the problem ignores all the vital factors.

It ignores the essential nature of books; the trifling tonnage they require (another 8,000 tons would have materially changed the situation) the additional and urgent wartime need of books, and the fact that book publishers who were mistaken enough to have their stocks blitzed at the wrong time, are set the impossible task (with which no newspaper or periodical is ever confronted) of replacing millions of lost books out of a ration inadequate even for current requirements.

But that is not the whole story—the ration was arbitrarily based upon the consumption during what was for most book-publishers a disastrous year, though for a few firms

such as a newspaper with big gift book schemes an unusually favourable one. You may thus find an important firm of scientific and medical publishers who did not happen to reprint many of their bigger text-books during the basic year left with a ration so small that now that their medical books are urgently wanted for war purposes they are unable to reproduce them. Conversely the book department of a newspaper may have a huge ration but no longer any gift book scheme. To-day we have the sorry spectacle of government department after government department waking up to the fact that they want certain essential books, and that they cannot get them. It has taken the war office on this occasion, as indeed on the last, just over three years to discover that if morale is to be maintained, the food ration must be supplemented with a mental ration. And they are now confronted with an acute shortage of all the books needed for their post-armistice educational schemes. A representative of the Board of Education, which ought, one would think, to demand a liberal supply of books with the vigour that the Admiralty demands ships, when told by the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in secondary schools that without increased production of books we were heading for educational chaos, blandly replied, "We don't believe that the shortage is really acute," though a visit to the nearest good book shop would have provided proof to the contrary.

Public money is, quite properly, spent on promoting a wider knowledge in foreign countries of British Life and Thought, and in no more effective way than in promoting the sale and distribution abroad of British books. But no adequate steps are taken to ensure that the books which are "better than goodwill missions" as someone has said, are available to achieve their good work.

Our whole attitude to books is both irrational and con-

tradictory. We pay lip service to their importance, but behave as if they were an unnecessary luxury. We talk as if the maintenance of an adequate supply was unattainable, whereas if it is granted that books are really wanted there is no problem at all. The real truth is that despite President Roosevelt's dictum that "you can no more win a war of ideas without books than you can win a naval battle without ships" we consistently show a contempt for books. I could give you instance after instance; one will suffice because it is so characteristic. Books were among the first not the last things to be made to suffer from the paper shortage. We applied the most formidable restrictions and economies in the use of paper to books which should be "a thing of beauty and joy for ever" nearly twelve months before they were made even theoretically obligatory to other printed matter such as balance sheets and reports of Company meetings destined for the waste-paper-basket. No, we don't burn books. We leave Hitler to do that both here and abroad. We are content to burn the straw from which the books might be made and to act upon the precept

Thou shalt not kill; but needst not strive

Officially to keep alive.

The chief feature of wartime publishing has in fact been the prolonged struggle in defence of books with one government department after another. No member of the delegation which pleaded with the late Chancellor of the Exchequer for the exemption of books from purchase tax is ever likely to forget Sir Kingsley Wood's confidence that books were of no importance, or the way in which he brushed the Archbishop of Canterbury and the rest of us aside with the statement that there were plenty of books in the country. No one can have been more surprised than the late Sir Kingsley Wood at the unanimity with which intelligent people in all sections of the community rose with one accord against a tax on knowledge. But every month,

every week the war has lasted, this battle for books has had to be fought afresh. The government in the shape of officials is hydra-headed and in the absence of any clear-cut recognition of the vital necessity of books as part of our wartime effort, every official seems to have regarded it as a part of his duty to impede their production. The amount of energy necessitated by this never-ceasing struggle is unbelievable, and the struggle is still going on.

We have most of us been led to believe that Spenlow and Jorkins were not incompetent in attributing responsibility the one to the other. But there were only two of them and they were mere amateurs compared with the many Government departments which have taken a hand at restricting the supply of books, and thereby hampering the intellectual and spiritual life of the nation.

Of one thing I am confident. They will be condemned in no uncertain fashion by future historians who will contrast not merely the excellent way in which we dealt with food for the body with the deplorable neglect of food for the mind, but the discouragement of established publishers with the stimulus given to racketeers, and express surprise that in a war of ideas in a scientific age books were not recognized as essential tools.

All this is a sad reflection of England's attitude to books, the more so because it is the better type of publishing that has invariably suffered the brunt of the attack. This last is a serious matter because we shall end by getting the kind of publisher and the kind of books which we deserve.

As Charles Morgan wisely said, "There are two principal aspects of Publishing: Idealistic and Commercial. The character of a firm must largely depend upon its reconciliation of them." There are all too few, apart from the endowed university presses, who are either willing or suitably placed to deal with learned books or work on abstruse subjects, but it is often in these spheres that the

publisher's function can be of special value to the community: the function, in other words, of placing specialized books in the hands of just those people, here and abroad, most in need of them. This function not only entails a minute knowledge of markets, but the publisher must in the first place have courage enough to accept such MSS. on a basis of intrinsic merit, not of sales possibilities; and at the same time he must have foresight enough to size up each book's potential public, every member of which must be informed, if need be, by personal circular.

The influence of the book publisher is more far-reaching than is realized and although the fact is not yet recognized the community has a definite interest in the maintenance by publishers of a high professional standard.

In America the cult of the best-seller has reached such a pitch that a scholarly work stands little chance of acceptance by a commercial publisher unless it has mass appeal. Over here there is still far more long-term non-commercial and prestige publishing than is usually credited, and this is as it should be. But if continuously discouraged it will disappear, and unfortunately in recent times discouragement has come to it from all sides.

It is a curious thing but, though doubtless unintentional, the incidence of all governmental action has been in that direction. War risks insurance, for example, endows improvident publishers by enabling them in case of loss to turn over-valued and possibly unsaleable stock into cash at inflated prices and penalizes the provident publisher who has wisely written down the value of his slow-selling stock. In the same way the Excess Profits Tax (in itself an entirely justifiable measure) was so hastily drafted that its results are disastrous to most long-term publishers whilst leaving one or two free to retain the entire benefit of unexpected wartime profits.

The regulations in regard to paper rationing, the use of

the so-called "free" paper, compassionate allowances (or the absence of allowances) of paper for blitzed stock might all of them have been designed to handicap the better type of publishing. These are but a few examples, and I mention them not because of their effects upon any individuals—let alone as a personal grievance—but because of their national importance. This whole problem is closely linked with the status of books and book publishing. The book trade is not "just another industry" but an integral part of the mental and spiritual life of the nation. On the Continent the universities recognize this fact by honouring publishers of distinction who have rendered exceptional service to learning. The mere thought of doing such a thing apparently horrifies a British university.

Even the industrial side of book publishing, however, has peculiar significance. As I have repeatedly pointed out (and it is now becoming recognized) "Trade follows the book". Is it not more than probable that foreign nations brought up on British scientific text-books would want the British instruments and machines therein described rather than others of which they had not the same intimate knowledge? And is this not equally true in varying degree in other directions than science? Certainly the Germans have acted upon this assumption.

The British Council is fully alive to this. In fact Sir Malcolm Robertson went so far as to state that "the work of the British Council was impossible without books"; and Mr. Brendan Bracken, of the Ministry of Information, had no hesitation in pronouncing books as "our best export". But let me emphasize in confirmation of my thesis that it is the better type of book not the purely ephemeral stuff to which they were referring.

As I have had occasion to dwell upon the ill-effects of the war on publishing, may I turn to the brighter side. First and foremost it has widened the public interest in books and

deepened the realization of their essentiality. It has helped to spread recognition of them as a readily available and inexhaustible store of knowledge. It has taught many, to quote the late Lord Snell's words, that "Books are a source of comfort and strength in hours of gloom and frustration, and that in health and sickness, in loneliness and sorrow, they are an ever-present help to us all". In fact that "Books are the daily bread of the spirit".

The most pleasing feature of all this is that young people are buying books, and not merely books, but good books. They want the best. It is additionally reassuring to observe that they are doing so for the acquisition of knowledge and the enjoyment of good literature, and not merely as an escape from war. And the keen interest of the present generation of children in books has been demonstrated during the war by the enthusiastic reception they have given to the Children's Book Weeks organized on their behalf by the National Book Council.

Secondly the war has proved a stimulus to co-operation between publishers. I could give many instances but three must suffice. The famous firm of wholesale booksellers, Simpkin Marshall, was blitzed and its entire business including a stock of about six million books was completely destroyed one Sunday night. By nine a.m. on the Monday, its chief competitor was already busily helping to deal with its orders. Before eleven its Managing Director was discussing future plans with me on the telephone, and within a matter of hours thereafter the Economic Relation Committee of the Publishers' Association had got busy and three of us had undertaken to buy the goodwill of the wholesale and export side of the business with a view to its becoming a Co-operative organization. To-day, thanks to the assistance of the brothers Pitman and their Book Centre and the determination of publishers generally (with one notable exception) that this indispensable link in the

chain of book-distribution should not be broken, Simpkin Marshall is once again a prosperous concern, run for the benefit of the book trade, and with representative publishers and booksellers on its board. This fortunate outcome we owe, as some witty person remarked, not to a heaven-sent but to a hell-sent opportunity.

My second example of co-operation is "Guild Books". Many publishers want from time to time to publish sixpenny or ninepenny editions of individual books; but it is uneconomic to issue isolated volumes at that price. Accordingly a group of publishers planned a new kind of undertaking. Books approved by an editorial board are produced (in an agreed uniform style) by the actual publishers concerned, but the marketing, publicity, and travelling are done collectively. There is thus no longer any need for publishers to lease their sixpenny rights to a third party. Unfortunately as Guild Books have not been granted a paper ration, this most promising co-operative scheme for providing the public with the good quality cheap books for which it clamours, has temporarily had to be largely suspended.

Finally publishers have at long last co-operated to secure the much needed statistics of book trade turnover. We now know that books are sold to the yearly value of round about £18,000,000 of which nearly £4,000,000 are exported and that there has been a steady increase of sale throughout the war despite blitzing, paper shortage, and innumerable other handicaps. The pre-war figures were £10,000,000, of which approximately £3,500,000 were exported.

Well—my time is nearly up and I am conscious that my picture of the publisher's activities is far from complete, and that I have said little about publishing as a calling. If it is different from what people suppose and much, much more exacting, it is incredibly fascinating. The work of

the better type of publisher brings him into close touch with the intellectual life of his time, affords him wide scope for initiative and gives him endless opportunities to help the cause of progress.

As the editor of the *Spectator* said only a few months ago, "Romance is a word inevitably and rightly associated with a great publishing-house. Publishing is business, of course, but is romance through and through—the romance of the association of great personalities, of Ballantyne and Constable with Walter Scott, of Murray with Byron, of Smith, Elder with Browning; the romance of nursing the unknown author through to fame, the gambles of judgment that may as easily mean losing as landing a prize. It is a great profession, even if at the same time it is a trade, and the great publishers of England and Scotland—for Scotland guards her individuality here as anywhere—are part and parcel of British greatness . . ."

Well, that is the verdict of the *Spectator*. May I add in my own words, taken from *The Truth about Publishing*, "Much is written of the power of the Press, a power which may last but a day; by comparison, little is heard of the power of books, which may endure for generations. The feeling that one may be building with permanent materials, the knowledge that one's name is associated with books that enshrine profound thought and the triumphs of the creative imagination adds fascination to the best publishing. To offer the public just what it wants, to pander to the worst prejudices of the moment, may be the speediest way to profits, here as elsewhere; but it is a dull road to follow. Publishing has far more thrilling adventures to offer the man who is ready to accompany pioneers along fresh paths; eager to help to overcome apathy, ignorance, and prejudice; anxious that, above all, the lamp of truth should be kept burning. It may not yield the same monetary reward, but it will afford a satisfaction no money can buy."

“ LIVVIE ”

By EUDORA WELTY

SOLOMON CARRIED LIVVIE twenty-one miles away from her home when he married her. He carried her away up on the Old Natchez Trace into the deep country to live in his house. She was sixteen—an only girl, then. Once people said he thought nobody would ever come along there. He told her himself that it had been a long time, and a day she did not know about, since that road was a travelled road with *people* coming and going. He was good to her but he kept her in the house. She had not thought that she could not get back. Where she came from, people said an old man did not want anybody in the world to ever find his wife, for fear they would steal her back from him. Solomon asked her before he took her, “ Would she be happy ? ”—very dignified, for he was a coloured man that owned his land and had it written down in the courthouse ; and she said, “ Yes, sir,” since he was an old man and she was young and just listened and answered. He asked her, if she was choosing winter, would she pine for spring, and she said, “ No, indeed.” Whatever she said, always, was because he was an old man . . . while nine years went by. All the time, he got old, and he got so old he gave out. At last he slept the whole day in bed, and she was young still.

It was a nice house, inside and outside both. In the first place, it had three rooms. The front room was papered in holly paper, with green palmettos from the swamp spaced at careful intervals over the wall. There was fresh newspaper cut with fancy borders on the mantelshelf, on which were propped photographs of old or very young men printed in faint yellow—Solomon’s people. Solomon had a houseful of furniture. There was a double settee, a tall scrolled rocker and an organ in the front room, all around a three-

legged table with a pink marble top, on which was set a lamp with three gold feet, besides a jelly glass with pretty hen feathers in it. Behind the front room, the other room had the bright iron bed with the polished knobs like a throne, in which Solomon slept all day. There were snow-white curtains of wiry lace at the window, and a lace bedspread belonged on the bed. But what old Solomon slept so sound under was a big feather-stitched piece-quilt in the pattern "Trip Around the World", which had twenty-one different colours, four hundred and forty pieces, and a thousand yards of thread, and that was what Solomon's mother made in her life and old age. There was a table holding the Bible, and a trunk with a key. On the wall were two calendars, and a diploma from somewhere in Solomon's family, and under that Livvie's one possession was nailed, a picture of the little white baby of the family she worked for, back in Natchez before she was married. Going through that room and on to the kitchen there was a big wood stove and a big round table always with a wet top and with the knives and forks in one jelly glass and the spoons in another, and a cut-glass vinegar bottle between, and going out from those many shallow dishes of pickled peaches, fig preserves, watermelon pickles, and blackberry jam always sitting there. The churn sat in the sun, the doors of the safe were always both shut, and there were four baited mousetraps in the kitchen, one in every corner.

The outside of Solomon's house looked nice. It was not painted, but across the porch was an even balance. On each side there was one easy chair with high springs, looking out, and a fern basket hanging over it from the ceiling, and a dishpan of zinnia seedlings growing at its foot on the floor. By the door was a plow-wheel, just a pretty iron circle, nailed up on one wall and a square mirror on the other, a turquoise-blue comb stuck up in the frame, with

the washstand beneath it. On the door was a wooden knob with a pearl in the end, and Solomon's black hat hung on that, if he was in the house.

Out front was a clean dirtyard with every vestige of grass patiently uprooted and the ground scarred in deep whorls from the strike of Livvie's broom. Rose bushes with tiny blood-red roses blooming every month grew in threes on either side of the steps. On one side was a peach tree, on the other a pomegranate. Then coming around up the path from the deep cut of the Natchez Trace below was a line of bare crape-myrtle trees with every branch of them ending in a coloured bottle, green or blue. There was no word that fell from Solomon's lips to say what they were for, but Livvie knew that there could be a spell put in trees, and she was familiar from the time she was born with the way bottle trees kept evil spirits from coming into the house—by luring them inside the coloured bottles, where they cannot get out again. Solomon had made the bottle trees with his own hands over the nine years, in labour amounting to about a tree a year, and without a sign that he had any uneasiness in his heart, for he took as much pride in his precautions against spirits coming in the house as he took in the house, and sometimes in the sun the bottle trees looked prettier than the house did.

It was a nice house. It was in a place where the days would go by and surprise anyone that they were over. The lamplight and the firelight would shine out the door after dark, over the still and breathing country, lighting the roses and the bottle trees, and all was quiet there.

But there was nobody, nobody at all, not even a white person. And if there had been anybody, Solomon would not have let Livvie look at them, just as he would not let her look at a field hand, or a field hand look at her. There was no house near, except for the cabins of the tenants that were forbidden to her, and there was no house as far as

she had been, stealing away down the still, deep trace. She felt as if she waded a river when she went, for the dead leaves on the ground reached as high as her knees, and when she was all scratched and bleeding she said it was not like a road that went anywhere. One day, climbing up the high bank, she had found a graveyard without a church, with ribbon-grass growing about the foot of an angel (she had climbed up because she thought she saw angel wings), and in the sun, trees shining like burning flames through the great caterpillar nets which enclosed them. Scarey thistles stood looking like the prophets in the Bible in Solomon's house. Indian paint brushes grew over her head, and the mourning dove made the only sound in the world. Oh, for a stirring of the leaves, and a breaking of the nets ! But not by a ghost, prayed Livvie, jumping down the bank. After Solomon took to his bed, she never went out, except one more time.

Livvie knew she made a nice girl to wait on anybody. She fixed things to eat on a tray like a surprise. She could keep from singing when she ironed, and to sit by a bed and fan away flies, she could be so still she could not hear herself breathe. She could clean up the house and never drop a thing, and wash the dishes without a sound, and she would step outside to churn, for churning sounded too sad to her, like sobbing, and if it made her homesick and not Solomon, she did not think of that.

But Solomon scarcely opened his eyes to see her, and scarcely tasted his food. He was not sick or paralysed or in any pain that he mentioned, but he was surely wearing out in the body, and no matter what nice hot thing Livvie would bring him to taste, he would only look at it now as if he were past seeing how he could add anything more to himself. Before she could beg him, he would go fast asleep. She could not surprise him any more, if he would not taste, and she was afraid that he was never in the world

going to taste another thing she brought him—and so how could he last ?

But one morning it was breakfast time and she cooked his eggs and grits, carried them in on a tray, and called his name. He was sound asleep. He lay in a dignified way with his watch beside him, on his back in the middle of the bed. One hand drew the quilt up high, though it was the first day of spring. Through the white lace curtains a little puffy wind was blowing as if it came from round cheeks. All night the frogs had sung out in the swamp like a commotion in the room, and he had not stirred, though she lay wide awake and saying "Shh, frogs !" for fear he would mind them.

He looked as if he would like to sleep a little longer, and so she put back the tray and waited a little. When she tiptoed and stayed so quiet, she surrounded herself with a little reverie, and sometimes it seemed to her when she was so stealthy that the quiet she kept was for a sleeping baby and that she had a baby and was its mother. When she stood at Solomon's bed and looked down at him, she would be thinking, "He sleeps so well," and she would hate to wake him up. And in some other way, too, she was afraid to wake him up because even in his sleep he seemed to be such a strict man.

Of course, nailed to the wall over the bed—only she would forget who it was—there was a picture of him when he was young. Then he had a fan of hair over his forehead like a king's crown. Now his hair lay down on his head, the spring had gone out of it. Solomon had a lightish face, with eyebrows scattered but rugged, the way privet grows, strong eyes, with second sight, a strict mouth, and a little gold smile. This was the way he looked in his clothes, but in bed in the daytime he looked like a different and smaller man, even when he was wide awake, and holding the Bible. He looked like somebody kin to himself. And then some-

times when he lay in sleep and she stood fanning the flies away, and the light came in, his face was like new, so smooth and clear that it was like a class of jelly held to the window, and she could almost look through his forehead and see what he thought.

She fanned him and at length he opened his eyes and spoke her name, but he would not taste the nice eggs she had kept warm under a pan.

Back in the kitchen she ate heartily, his breakfast and hers and looked out the open door at what went on. The whole day, and the whole night before, she had felt the stir of spring close to her. It was as present in the house as a young man would be. The moon was in the last quarter and outside they were turning the sod and planting peas and beans. Up and down the red fields, over which smoke from the brush-burning hung showing like a little skirt of sky, a white horse and a white mule pulled the plough. At intervals hoarse shouts came through the air and roused her if she dozed neglectfully in the shade, and they were telling her, "Jump up!" She could see how over each ribbon of field were moving men and girls, on foot and mounted on mules, with hats set on their heads and bright with tall hoes and forks as if they carried streamers on them and were going to some place on a journey—and how as if at a signal now and then they would all start at once shouting, hollering, cajoling, calling and answering back, running, being leaped on and breaking away, flinging to earth with a shout and lying motionless in the trance of twelve o'clock. The old women came out of the cabins and brought them the food they had ready for them, and then all worked together, spread evenly out. The little children came, too, like a bouncing stream overflowing the fields, and set upon the men, the women, the dogs, the rushing birds, and the wave-like rows of earth, their little voices almost too high to be heard. In the middle distance, like

some white and gold towers, were the haystacks, with black cows coming around to eat their edges. High above everything, the wheel of fields, house, and cabins, and the deep road surrounding like a moat to keep them in, was the turning sky, blue with long, far-flung white mare's-tail clouds, serene and still as high flames. And sound asleep while all this went around him that was his, Solomon was like a little still spot in the middle.

Even in the house the earth was sweet to breathe. Solomon had never let Livvie go any farther than the chicken house and the well. But what if she would walk now into the heart of the fields and take a hoe and work until she fell stretched out and drenched with her efforts, like other girls, and laid her cheek against the laid-open earth, and shamed the old man with her humbleness and delight? To shame him! A cruel wish could come in uninvited and so fast while she looked out the back door. She washed the dishes and scrubbed the table. She could hear the cries of the little lambs. Her mother, that she had not seen since her wedding day, had said one time, "I rather a man be anything, than a woman be mean."

So all morning she kept tasting the chicken broth on the stove, and when it was right she poured off a nice cupful. She carried it in to Solomon, and there he lay having a dream. Now what did he dream about? For she saw him sigh gently as if not to disturb some whole thing he held round in his mind, like a fresh egg. So even an old man dreamed about something pretty. Did he dream of her, while his eyes were shut and sunken, and his small hand with the wedding ring curled close in sleep around the quilt? He might be dreaming of what time it was, for even through his sleep he kept track of it like a clock, and knew how much of it went by, and waked up knowing where the hands were even before he consulted the silver watch that he never let go. He would sleep with the watch in his palm

and even holding it to his cheek like a child that loves a plaything. Or he might dream of journeys and travels on a steamboat to Natchez. Yet she thought he dreamed of her; but even while she scrutinized him, the rods of the foot of the bed seemed to rise up like a rail fence between them, and she could see that people never could be sure of anything as long as one of them was asleep and the other awake. To look at him dreaming of her when he might be going to die frightened her a little, as if he might carry her with him that way, and she wanted to run out of the room. She took hold of the bed and held on, and Solomon opened his eyes and called her name, but he did not want anything. He would not taste the good broth.

Just a little after that, as she was taking up the ashes in the front room for the last time in the year, she heard a sound. It was somebody coming. She pulled the curtains together and looked through the slit.

Coming up the path under the bottle trees was a white lady. At first she looked young, but then she looked old. Marvellous to see, a little car stood steaming like a kettle out in the field-track—it had come without a road.

Livvie stood listening to the long, repeated knockings at the door, and after a while she opened it just a little. The lady came in through the crack, though she was more than middle-sized and wore a big hat.

“My name is Miss Baby Marie,” she said.

Livvie gazed respectfully at the lady and at the little suitcase she was holding close to her by the handle until the proper moment. The lady’s eyes were running over the room, from palmetto to palmetto, but she was saying, “I live at home . . . out from Natchez . . . and get out and show these pretty cosmetic things to the white people and the coloured people both . . . all around . . . years and years. . . . Both shades of powder and rouge. . . . It’s the kind of work

a girl can do and not go clear 'way from home. . . ." And the harder she looked, the more she talked. Suddenly she turned up her nose and said, "It is not Christian or sanitary to put feathers in a vase," and then she took a gold key out of the front of her dress and began unlocking the locks on her suitcase. Her face drew the light, the way it was covered with intense white and red, with a little patty-cake of white between the wrinkles by her upper lip. Little red tassels of hair bobbed under the rusty wires of her picture-hat, as with an air of triumph and secrecy she now drew open her little suitcase and brought out bottle after bottle and jar after jar, which she put down on the table, the mantel-piece, the settee, and the organ.

"Did you ever see so many cosmetics in your life?" cried Miss Baby Marie.

"No'm," Livvie tried to say, but the cat had her tongue.

"Have you ever applied cosmetics?" asked Miss Baby Marie next.

"No'm," Livvie tried to say.

"Then look!" she said, and pulling out the last thing of all, "Try this!" she said. And in her hand was unclenched a golden lipstick which popped open like magic. A fragrance came out of it like incense, and Livvie cried out suddenly, "Chinaberry flowers!"

Her hand took the lipstick, and in an instant she was carried away in the air through the spring, and looked down with a half-drowsy smile from a purple cloud she saw from above a chinaberry tree, dark and smooth and neatly leaved, neat as a guinea hen in the dooryard, and there was her home that she had left. On one side of the tree was her mama holding up her heavy apron, and she could see it was loaded with ripe figs, and on the other side was her paper holding a fish-pole over the pond, and she could see it transparently, the little clear fishes swimming up to the brim.

"Oh, no, not chinaberry flowers—secret ingredients," said Miss Baby Marie. "My cosmetics have secret ingredients—not chinaberry flowers."

"It's purple," Livvie breathed, and Miss Baby Marie said, "Use it freely. Rub it on."

Livvie tiptoed out to the washstand on the front porch and before the mirror put the paint on her mouth. In the wavery surface her face danced before her like a flame. Miss Baby Marie followed her out, took a look at what she had done, and said, "That's it."

Livvie tried to say "Thank you" without moving her parted lips, where the paint lay so new.

By now Miss Baby Marie stood behind Livvie and looked in the mirror over her shoulder, twisting up the tassels of her hair. "The lipstick I can let you have for only two dollars," she said, close to her neck.

"Lady, but I don't have no money, never did have," said Livvie.

"Oh, but you don't pay the first time. I make another trip, that's the way I do. I come back again—later."

"Oh," said Livvie, pretending she understood everything so as to please the lady.

"But if you don't take it now, this may be the last time I'll call at your house," said Miss Baby Marie sharply. "It's far away from anywhere, I'll tell you that. You don't live close to anywhere."

"Yes'm. My husband, he keep the *money*," said Livvie, trembling. "He is strict as he can be. He don't know *you* walk in here—Miss Baby Marie!"

"Where is he?"

"Right now, he is yonder sound asleep, an old man. I wouldn't ever ask him for anything."

Miss Baby Marie took back the lipstick and packed it up. She gathered up the jars for both black and white and got them all inside the suitcase, with the same little fuss of

triumph with which she had brought them out. She started away.

"Good-bye," she said, making herself look grand from the back, but at the last minute she turned around in the door. Her old hat wobbled as she whispered, "Let me see your husband."

Livvie obediently went on tiptoe and opened the door to the other room. Miss Baby Marie came behind her and rose on her toes and looked in.

"My, what a little tiny old, old man!" she whispered, clasping her hands and shaking her head over them. "What a beautiful quilt! What a tiny old, old man!"

"He can sleep like that all day," whispered Livvie, proudly.

They looked at him awhile so fast asleep, and then all at once they looked at each other. Somehow that was as if they had a secret, for he had never stirred. Livvie then politely, but all at once, closed the door.

"Well! I'd certainly like to leave you with a lipstick!" said Miss Baby Marie vivaciously. She smiled in the door.

"Lady, but I told you I don't have no money, and never did have."

"And never will?" In the air and all around, like a bright halo around the white lady's nodding head, it was a true spring day.

"Would you take eggs, lady?" asked Livvie softly.

"No, I have plenty of eggs—plenty," said Miss Baby Marie.

"I still don't have no money," said Livvie, and Miss Baby Marie took her suitcase and went on somewhere else.

Livvie stood watching her go, and all the time she felt her heart beating in her left side. She touched the place with her hand. It seemed as if her heart beat and her whole face flamed from the pulsing colour of her lips. She went to sit by Solomon and when he opened his eyes he could not

see a change in her. "He's fixin' to die," she said inside. That was the secret. That was when she went out of the house for a little breath of air.

She went down the path and down the Natchez Trace a way, and she did not know how far she had gone, but it was not far, when she saw a sight. It was a man, looking like a vision—she standing on one side of the Old Natchez Trace and he standing on the other.

As soon as this man caught sight of her, he began to look himself over. Starting at the bottom with his pointed shoes, he began to look up, lifting his peg-top pants the higher to see fully his bright socks. His coat long and wide and leaf-green he opened like doors to see his high-up tawny pants and his pants he smoothed downward from the points of his collar, and he wore a luminous baby-pink satin shirt. At the end, he reached gently above his wide platter-shaped round hat, the colour of a plum, and one finger touched at the feather, emerald green, blowing in the spring winds.

No matter how she looked, she could never look so fine as he did, and she was not sorry for that, she was pleased.

He took three jumps, one down, and two up, and was by her side. "My name is Cash," he said.

He had a guinea-pig in his pocket. They began to walk along. She stared on and on at him, as if he were doing some daring spectacular thing, instead of just walking beside her. It was not simply the city way he was dressed that made her look at him and see hope in its insolence looking back. It was not only the way he moved along kicking the flowers as if he could break through everything in the way and destroy anything in the world, that made her eyes grow bright. It might be, if he had not appeared the way he did appear that day she would never have looked so closely at him, but the time people come makes a difference.

They walked through the still leaves of the Natchez

Trace, the light and the shade falling through trees about them, the white irises shining like candles on the banks and the new ferns shining like green stars up in the oak branches. They came out at Solomon's house, bottle trees and all. Livvie stopped and hung her head.

Cash began whistling a little tune. She did not know what it was, but she had heard it before from a distance, and she had a revelation. Cash was a field hand. He was a transformed field hand. Cash belonged to Solomon. But he had stepped out of his overalls into this. There in front of Solomon's house he laughed. He had a round head, a round face, all of him was young, and he flung his head up, rolled it against the mare's-tail sky in his round hat, and he could laugh just to see Solomon's house sitting there. Livvie looked at it, and there was Solomon's black hat hanging on the peg on the front door, the blackest thing in the world.

"I been to Natchez," Cash said, wagging his head around against the sky. "*I* taken a trip, *I* ready for Easter!"

How was it possible to look so fine before the harvest? Cash must have stolen the money, stolen it from Solomon. He stood in the path and lifted his spread hand high and brought it down again and again in his laughter. He kicked up his heels. A little chill went through her. It was as if Cash was bringing that strong hand down to beat a drum or to rain blows upon a man, such an abandon and menace were in his laugh. Frowning, she went closer to him and his swinging arm drew her in at once and the fright was crushed from her body, as a little match-flame might be smothered out by what it lighted. She gathered the folds of his coat behind him and fastened her red lips to his mouth, and she was dazzled by herself then, and the way he had been dazzled at himself to begin with.

In that instant she felt something that could not be told—that Solomon's death was at hand, that he was the same to

her as if he were dead now. She cried out, and uttering little cries turned and ran for the house.

At once Cash was coming, following after he was running behind her. He came close, and half-way up the path he laughed and passed her. He even picked up a stone and sailed it into the bottle trees. She put her hands over her head, and sounds clattered through the bottle trees like cries of outrage. Cash stamped and plunged zigzag up the front steps and in at the door.

When she got there he had stuck his hands in his pockets and was turning slowly about in the front room. The little guinea-pig peeped out. Around Cash the pinned-up palmettos looked as if a lazy green monkey had walked up and down and around the walls leaving green prints of his hands and feet.

She got through the room and his hands were still in his pockets, and she fell upon the closed door to the other room and pushed it open. She ran to Solomon's bed, calling "Solomon ! Solomon !" The little shape of the old man never moved at all, wrapped under the quilt as if it were winter still.

"Solomon !" She pulled the quilt away, but there was another one under that, and she fell on her knees beside him. He made no sound except a sigh, and then she could hear in the silence the light springy steps of Cash walking and walking in the front room, and the ticking of Solomon's silver watch, which came from the bed. Old Solomon was far away in his sleep, his face looked small, relentless, and devout, as if he were walking somewhere where she could imagine snow falling.

Then there was a noise like a hoof pawing the floor, and the door gave a creak, and Cash appeared beside her. When she looked up Cash's face was so black it was bright, and so bright and bare of pity that it looked sweet to her. She stood up and held up her head. Cash was so powerful that

his presence gave her strength even when she did not need any.

Under their eyes Solomon slept. People's faces tell of things and places not known to the one who looks at them while asleep, and while Solomon slept under the eyes of Livvie and Cash his face told them like a mythical story that all his life he had built, little scrap by little scrap, respect. A beetle could not have been more laborious or more ingenious in the task of its destiny. When Solomon was young, as he was in his picture overhead, it was the infinite thing with him, and he could see no end to the respect he would contrive and keep in a house. He had built a lonely house, the way he would make a cage, but it grew to be the same with him as a great monumental pyramid and sometimes in his absorption of getting it erected he was like the builder-slaves of Egypt who forgot or never knew the origin and meaning of the thing to which they gave all the strength of their bodies and used up all their days. Livvie and Cash could see that as a man might rest from a life-labour he lay in his bed, and they could hear how, wrapped in his quilt, he sighed to himself comfortably in sleep, while in his dreams he might have been an ant, a beetle, a bird, an Egyptian, assembling and carrying on his back and building with his hands, or he might have been an old man of India or a swaddled baby, about to smile and brush all away.

Then without warning old Solomon's eyes flew wide open under the hedge-like brows. He was wide awake.

And instantly Cash raised his quick arm. A radiant sweat stood on his temples. But he did not bring his arm down—it stayed in the air, as if something might have taken hold.

It was not Livvie—she did not move. As if something said "Wait," she stood waiting. Even while her eyes burned under motionless lids, her lips parted in a stiff grimace, and with her arms stiff at her sides she stood above

the prone old man and the panting young one, erect and apart.

Movement when it came came in Solomon's face. It was an old and strict face, a frail face, but behind it, like a covered light, came an animation that could play hide and seek, that would dart and escape, had always escaped. The mystery flickered in him, and invited from his eyes. It was that very mystery that Cash with his quick arm would have to strike, and that Livvie could not weep for. But Cash only stood holding his arm in the air, when the gentlest flick of his great strength, almost a puff of his breath, would have been enough, if he had known how to give it, to send the old man over the obstruction that kept him away from death.

If it could not be that the tiny illumination in the fragile and ancient face caused a crisis, a mystery in the room that would not permit a blow to fall, at least it was certain that Cash, throbbing in his Easter clothes, felt a pang of shame that the vigour of a man would come to such an end that he could not be struck without warning. He took down his hand and stepped back behind Livvie, like a round-eyed schoolboy on whose unsuspecting head the dunce-cap has been set.

"Young ones can't wait," said Solomon.

Livvie shuddered violently, and then in a gush of tears she stooped for a glass of water and handed it to him, but he did not see her.

"So here come the young man Livvie wait for. Was no prevention. No prevention. Now I lay eyes on young man and it come to be somebody I know all the time, and been knowing since he were born in a cotton patch, and watched grow up year to year, Cash McCord, grew to size, grew up to come in my house in the end—ragged and barefoot."

Solomon gave a cough of distaste. Then he shut his

eyes vigorously, and his lips began to move like a chanter's.

"When Livvie married, her husband were already somebody. He had paid great cost for his land. He spread sycamore leaves over the ground from wagon to door, day he brought her home, so her foot would not have to touch ground. He carried her through his door. Then he grew old and could not lift her, and she were still young."

Livvie's sobs followed his words like a soft melody repeating each thing as he stated it. His lips moved for a little without sound, or she cried too fervently, and unheard he might have been telling his whole life, and then he said, "God forgive Solomon for sins great and small. God forgive Solomon for carrying away too young girl for wife and keeping her away from her people and from all the young people would clamour for her back."

Then he lifted up his right hand toward Livvie where she stood by the bed and offered her his silver watch. Her dangled it before her eyes, and she hushed crying; her tears stopped. For a moment the watch could be heard ticking as it always did, precisely in his proud hand. She lifted it away. Then he took hold of the quilt; then he was dead.

Livvie left Solomon dead and went out of the room. Stealthily, nearly without noise, Cash went beside her. He was like a shadow, but his shiny shoes moved over the floor in spangles, and the green downy feather shone like a light in his hat. As they reached the front room he seized her deftly as a long black cat and dragged her hanging by the waist round and round him, while he turned in a circle, his face bent down to hers. The first moment she kept one arm and its hand stiff and still, the one that held Solomon's watch. Then the fingers softly let go, all of her was limp, and the watch fell somewhere on the floor. It

ticked away in the still room, and all at once there began outside the full song of a bird.

They moved around and around the room and into the brightness of the open door, then he stopped and shook her once. She rested in silence in his trembling arms, unprotesting as a bird on a nest. Outside the redbirds were flying and criss-crossing, the sun was in all the bottles on the prisoned trees, and the young peach was shining in the middle of them with the bursting light of spring.

SEVEN NEW POEMS

By H. D.

I

HERMES TRISMEGISTUS
is patron of alchemists ;

his province is thought,
inventive, artful and curious ;

his metal is quicksilver,
his clients, orators, thieves and poets

steal then, O orator,
plunder, O poet,

take what the old church
found in Mithra's tomb,

candle and script and bell,
take what the new-church spat upon

and broke and shattered ;
collect the fragments of the splintered glass

and of your fire and breath,
melt down and integrate,

re-invoke, re-create
opal, onyx, obsidian,

now scattered in the shards
men tread upon.

IV

Not in our time, O Lord,
the plowshare for the sword,

not in our time, the knife,
sated with life-blood and life,

to trim the barren vine ;
no grape-leaf for the thorn,

no vine-flower for the crown ;
not in our time, O King,

the voice to quell the regathering,
thundering storm.

V

Nay—*peace be still*—
lovest thou not Azrael,

the last and greatest, Death ?
lovest not the sun,

the first who giveth life,
Raphael ? *lovest thou me ?*

lover of sand and shell,
know who withdraws the veil,

holds back the tide and shapes
shells to the wave-shapes? Gabriel:

Raphael, Gabriel, Azrael,
three of seven—what is War

to Birth, to Change, to Death?
yet he, red-fire is one of seven fires,

judgment and will of God.
God's very breath—Uriel.

XV

Annael—this was another voice,
hardly a voice, a breath, a whisper,

and I remembered bell-notes,
Azrael, Gabriel, Raphael,

as when in Venice, one of the campanili
speaks and another answers,

until it seems the whole city (Venice-Venus)
will be covered with gold pollen shaken

from the bell-towers, lilies plundered
with the weight of massive bees . . .

XVIII

For Uriel, no temple
but everywhere,

the outer precincts and the squares
are fragrant ;

the festival opens as before
with the dove's murmuring ;

for Uriel, no temple
but Love's sacred groves,

withered in Thebes and Tree,
flower elsewhere.

XIX

We see her visible and actual
beauty incarnate,

as no high-priest of Astoroth
could compel her

with incense
and potent spell ;

we asked for no sign
but she gave a sign unto us ;

sealed with the seal of death,
we thought not to entreat her

but prepared us for burial ;
then she set a charred tree before us,

burnt and stricken to the heart ;
was it may-tree or apple ?

XX

Invisible, indivisible Spirit,
how is it you come so near,

how is it that we dare
approach the high-altar ?

we crossed the charred portico,
passed through a frame—doorless—

entered a shrine ; like a ghost,
we entered a house through a wall ;

then still not knowing
whether (like the wall)

we were there or not-there,
we saw the tree flowering ;

it was an ordinary tree
in an old garden-square.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE WALLS DO NOT FALL. H. D. Oxford University Press. 3s. 6d.

POETRY-LOVERS who are like Mr. Goodbear, in a delectable contemporary poem, and "remember remembering such a lot," will be reminded that the now familiar initials H. D. first took on their delicate aura of poetic magic over a number of translations of fragments from Euripides, which ignored all ancient metrical structures and gave a vivid, newly coined aspect to immemorial phrases by words chosen for sensitive imagery, and brief drifting cadences heard, as though intermittently, from far away.

In the years which have passed since the appearance of that first brochure, H. D. has made those highly personal Spring-time measures into a private kingdom of her own—something of a Grand-Duchy of Poetry in which the sighing of her fleeting music can be a medium of most various expression, susceptible to remarkable changes of feeling and theme, without departing from that first invention of a model expression of her own. A year ago, at the Poets' Reading in the Æolian Hall, she gave to her "The Ancient Wisdom" a vocal being so completely in harmony with her writing that it recalled the appearance of her printed words.

That poem is not included in this present volume; but it might well have been, for its identity in spirit with the poet's present theme of these tragic years and their first crisis in the Battle of London, and the serene spiritual emanations which she senses beneath their tortured surface. For serenity prevails everywhere in this exceptional, salient wartime poem: it does not seek to depict the mere mounting, circumambient acts of destruction, nor to "relieve" such set pieces by vignettes of terror or heroism or resignation—yet all this is present and vivid, as colour and form

of a flower become invisibly, instantaneously present in releasing the aroma of its distilled attar:—

“as the fallen roof
leaves the sealed room open to the air,

“so, through our desolation,
thoughts stir, inspiration stalks us
through gloom . . .

“the Pythian pronounces—we pass on
to another cellar, another sliced wall
where poor utensils show
like rare objects in a museum;

“Pompeii has nothing to teach us,
we know crack of volcanic fissure . . .

“over us, Apocryphal fire,
under us, the earth sway, dip of a floor,
slope of a pavement . . .

“yet the frame held:
we passed the flame: we wonder
what saved us? what for?”

What for? There is one of the later works of Paul Nash, in which the material that he would once have massed in atmospheric effect over a wide landscape remains only in a detail or two as tokens—rustling woodland, in a life-size dead leaf or two, executed with a care like Breughel's, and a mushroom that emerges among such dead leaves; yet not a Still-Life, with their implications of so much that is absent. In some such way the poet turns from the shattering city to consider a shell, type of dwellings that cannot be shattered, and a worm uninterruptedly busy in collating the still pristine earth without which men would have neither living-room nor fighting-room; earth that is indifferent to being shattered, and that heals again without anyone taking thought about it.

These striking sections of this unusual poetic sequence are possibly the best things in a book that is all accomplished—the shell—

“ indigestible, hard, ungiving,
so that, living within,
you beget, self-out-of-self,
selfless,
that pearl-of-great-price.”

The worm's persistence, clinging “ to grass-blade, the back of a leaf ”, then “ rain swept Down the valley of a leaf . . . ”

“ a worm on the leaf,
a worm in the dust,
“ a worm on the ear-of-wheat
I am yet unrepentant,
“ for I know how the Lord God
is about to manifest, when I,
“ the industrious worm
spin my own shroud ! ”

From the worm to the “ erect serpent ”—“ bearer of the secret wisdom ” :—

“ but if you do not even understand what words say,
how can you expect to pass judgment
on what words conceal ? ”

This is to telescope the poet's argument unfairly ; one property of right poetry is that, to be fair to a poet's argument, the reviewer should quote the poem. Space forbids.

And still more so as the poet looks still further for the essence of her purpose : “ though no word pass between us, there is subtle appraisement ” ; yet “ *in the beginning was the Word* ” :—

“ Let us substitute
enchantment for sentiment,
“ re-dedicate our gifts
to spiritual realism . . .
“ now is the time to re-value
our secret hoard . . .

“possibly we will reach haven,
heaven.”

Again, the compression is unfair : for H. D. will be of the company !

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

PLANET AND GLOW-WORM. Compiled by EDITH SITWELL. Macmillan. 6s.

SOME, WHEN THEY pick flowers, rip the stem from the plant ; others detach the flower gently, as if, though removing, they bring it, in bouquet, to a further stage in its life. Miss Sitwell as an anthologist is of the latter, and rarer, sort. The poems which she chooses, the excerpts she makes, are not ripped roughly from their text, slammed between covers and presented with as little life in them as pressed leaves in an album. Instead, complementary or contrasting to each other, they shine with a new light, or with their old light seen from another angle, in the bouquets she arranges : nor does her wide range and deep reading cause shunning of familiar beauties. Here, as well as Chinese poetry, Paul Eluard, Crashaw, John Gower, are Herrick, Keats, the nightpiece from *The Merchant of Venice*, and Sir Thomas Browne's great periods from *The Garden of Cyrus*.

They are gathered to soothe the sleepless. “Here are evocations of a beauty that holds no terror” and so soothing are they that at first sight one is inclined to wish the book were longer ; one could read all night, one feels, and let sleep go where it may. But that is not Miss Sitwell's purpose. “It is not a book to be dipped into,” but to be read through, and thus must be of compassable length. “The extracts take their various places because, between waking and sleep, we move from one state of being to another which arose from it ; we should allow ourselves to drift through these states ! Sometimes the light, the glamour of star or of glow-worm lies upon this state.

Sometimes we are in the heat of the sun, for the summer heat has often induced in us sleep . . . From (*Marco Polo's*) The Tree of the Sun, one of the most drowsy-sounding of all evocations, we move, not far away, to the air-rills of (*Peele's*) Bethsabe's Song. Or with (*Brownne's*) "Of Order in the Planting of Trees" we have drifted back to the beginning of the world and are with Noah and his sons . . . So the world is safer than we thought . . . safer, since it survived the Flood."

And many a reader will wake in the morning grateful that perusal of this golden book has, as its compiler promised, brought happy sleep in its train; perhaps for the first time in months.

TREVOR JAMES

OTHER MEN'S FLOWERS. Selected and Annotated by Field Marshal Viscount WAVELL, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.C. Cape. 10s. 6d.

THE READER WILL mislead himself, who approaches this book certain that he knows the kind of poetry a soldier will like. Truly, there is what will seem to most of us a disproportionate amount of Browning and Kipling. Lord Wavell in part explains this, because these "are two poets whose work has stayed most in my memory, since I read them in impressionable youth", and this is an anthology based on memory, and therefore represents the kind of poetry popular in that youth almost as much as the personal choice claimed for it. "It amused me lately to set down in a notebook the poems I could repeat entire or in great part. I have now collected and arranged the poems I set down. I ask no one to applaud my choice. I do not always applaud it myself, but a part of me from which I cannot dissociate myself, my memory, has made this selection, and I am too old to alter it."

It remains for a reviewer but to indicate that choice.

Rex Warner

THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES

a new and unrhymed translation

7s. 6d.

WHY WAS I KILLED?

third large edition now available

“What is impressive is Mr Warner’s
handling of the theme : his noble
tolerance and his fairness.”

7s. 6d.

UNIFORM EDITION OF THE NOVELS **The Aerodrome, The Professor, The Wild Goose Chase**

ready very shortly, 7s. 6d. per vol.

THE BODLEY HEAD

Masefield, Belloc, and Chesterton there are a-plenty; but also Hopkins and Christina Rossetti. Wordsworth and Tennyson "never registered an impression on my memory, they seem to me to belong to a limbo which is earthy without being quite human and star-gazing without being inspired," but Blake and Francis Thompson "have left in my brain clear traces of their imagery". Blank verse "does not seem to stay there so easily so there is little of Shakespeare, often though I read him". That little includes Sonnets 33 and 129. There are other Elizabethans—Raleigh, Dekker, Nashe (no Marlowe). Indeed, the surprise of the book, for English readers, will be that among so much Scott and such a rhymed film-script as *The Mary Gloster* there should be room for Shirley, the Countess of Winchilsea, the *Lyke Wage Dirge* and much else "Anon".

The non-English reader who, it is safe to presume, will find the book just another of the reasons why the English are incomprehensible, will be further baffled by the Notes, which "are not altogether my fault, the publisher asked for them". Apart from an unfortunate depreciation of contemporary youth on p. 170, they are not pompous, and range from "The gipsy in real life is usually both dirty and dull. So is war. Yet both have a supposed glamour . . . This is due, I suppose, to the persistence in man's memory of his old past as nomad and warrior" to "Should a poet, or any man, have one love or many? The question seems equivalent to asking 'Should a man have mumps as well as measles?'". Truly, the English are mad! And how maddening it is for others that such a poetry and such a soldier should be produced by such madness!

TREVOR JAMES

PARIS UNDERGROUND. ETTA SHIBER. Harrap. 10s. 6d.
THIS BOOK APPEARS at an opportune moment. It is the best

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

Bugle Blast

A Second Anthology from the Forces

Edited by JACK AISTROP *and*

REGINALD MOORE

A second collection of work by writers in the Services. It is slightly larger than the first volume and contains thirty-two contributions, including work by Alun Lewis, John Pudney and Patricia Ledward.

6s. net

Easy Money

And two other Plays

ALEXANDER OSTROVSKY

Translated by DAVID MAGARSHACK

The first English Translation of three famous comedies, *Easy Money*, *Even A Wise Man Stumbles* and *Wolves and Sheep*, by Russia's greatest playwright.

10s. 6d. net

Plato and His Dialogues

G. LOWES DICKINSON

"No apter or more luminous brief introduction to the thought of Socrates and Plato could easily be found."—*Quarterly Review*.

"Again and again he makes us look at our own age while he speaks of another age. It is a most remarkable book"—*Listener*.

2nd impression. 6s. net

The Absolute at Large

KAREL ČAPEK

"The book is well worth reading again because of the rich invention, its mixture of seriousness and lightheartedness, and its genial satire poured out without rancour on society and mankind in general."—*Listener*. *New Edition*. 2nd impression. 7s. 6d. net

40 MUSEUM STREET • LONDON • W.C.1

read and the most simple. The author was an American, a widow of middle age who was living in Paris with a friend who was British by birth and French by marriage. In June, 1940, they tried to escape but decided it was impossible. As they were returning to their home they found a wounded English pilot. They smuggled him into their flat, nursed him and began, with an incredible disregard of danger, the first "railway" by which over a hundred and fifty Englishmen were helped to escape. Eventually they were caught and imprisoned. Mrs. Shiber was eventually exchanged for the notorious hairdresser spy, Joanna Hofmann, her friend disappeared and is feared to have been shot.

The pictures of life in Paris and in the various prisons are unforgettable. It is astounding that the author could have survived the torments inflicted on her. Perhaps the most moving chapter of the book is that where she describes how Nazi officials greeted the hairdresser with bands and speeches whilst she sat quietly among a crowd of refugees at the Spanish frontier. The story is the more poignant because both women loved their home, they were unpolitical, their courage flowered from the moment itself, and was not a matter of previous preparation or belief. At this time, when the deliverance of France is at hand, all people should read the book and remember its unbiassed record when peace terms become a matter for discussion.

BRYHER

THE AMERICAN CHARACTER. MARGARET MEAD.

Pelican Books. 2s.

WE ARE ALL tired of reconstruction theories but Margaret Mead (whose books on anthropology will be familiar to many readers) is one of the few to make us feel she has something definite to offer to this much-discussed subject. This is particularly apparent in one of her final chapters, "Building the world new" because as she says, to speak of "a

STALIN AND ETERNAL RUSSIA

by WALTER KOLARZ

"Mr Kolarz has written a very good little book which in substance provides a clear and telling historical analysis of the character of Soviet patriotism. Written with firm historical insight and a sound sense of the realities of Russian intellectual tradition." *Times Lit. Supp.*

"The author's main thesis is the continuity between pre- and post-revolutionary Russian history. He also devotes himself to the study of the new Soviet patriotism and to two problems, the national minorities and the recent developments in Soviet literature." *From a review of the German edition in the Dublin Review* 6s.

Write for Summer list and catalogue, sent free.

Lindsay Drummond Ltd., 6 Buckingham St., W.C 2

THE CENTENARY OF A WORLD FAITH

A short history of the Bahá'í Faith from 1844 to the present day, with an account of the Founders of the Faith and of its spread throughout the world.

WITH 19 PHOTOGRAPHS

PLASTIC BOUND

CLOTH 5/-

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

1 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON, S.W. 1

Poetry by Dr. Marie Stopes

Early Work

Man, Other Poems and
a Preface - - - 3/6

1939

Love Songs for Young
Lovers - - - 5/- & 10/6

JOHN MASEFIELD, O.M., the Poet Laureate: "I hope you will write more poems like *We Burn*. In these you are doing well what no one else could do."

Oriri. 1940 - - - 3/6

BERNARD SHAW: "Amazing! It will keep up your new reputation as a poet nobly."

Instead of Tears. In Memoriam to H.M.S. Cossack - - - 6d.

LAURENCE BINYON: "Thank you for a glowing poem."

William Heinemann, Ltd.
LONDON

new world" usually means scrapping much that was valuable in the old. She analyses fascism and democracy, and rightly insists that the quality that has saved democracy is that it is far more flexible. She discusses how the average pattern of family life stamps itself upon a nation. The study is valuable in two ways, as a picture of how the young American grows up and as an analysis of modern culture. It is particularly valuable for the young and for those whose concern is with education.

LAMBERT STONE

THE UNDERGROUND PRESS IN BELGIUM.

Belgian Ministry of Information.

ANGLETERRE ET BELGIQUE. ROGER MOTZ.

Lindsay Drummond.

THE HISTORY OF ANGLO-BELGIAN RELATIONS. Dr. H. W. HOWES. Belgian Information Office.

TWO OF THESE pamphlets belong strictly to the realms of factual information; the one on the underground Press contains many tragic stories, first in an English translation, then the original newspaper pages are reproduced. *Angleterre et Belgique* has been composed, we imagine, to give Belgians after the "liberation" a picture of England at war and of the Belgian fighters here since 1940. The third booklet, however, is in a class by itself and the best written and most readable example of this type of publication that I have read for a long time. It is a summary by Dr. Howes of the historical links between the two countries from the time that a King of the West Saxons married the daughter of a Count of Flanders, through the Hundred Years' War, the residence of the printer, Caxton, at Bruges, to Elizabethan and Restoration connections and the present day. There are many interesting illustrations, and if enlarged a little it would deserve wide circulation.

BRYHER

SUSTAINED EFFORT

Changed conditions have, for many people, resulted in longer hours and harder work. Not infrequently the extra effort demanded causes headaches and muscular aches and pains. Those responsible for the health of workers in war factories have been quick to recognise the merits of 'ANADIN' in alleviating pain and distress. Invaluable also in the treatment of rheumatism, neuralgia, neuritis and the common cold.

1/5 & 2/10 (inc. Tax)

ANADIN
TABLETS
FOR THE RELIEF OF PAIN

WANTED
MODERN BOOKS

CHILDREN'S
ENCYCLOPAEDIA
(10 Vols.)

ENCYCLOPAEDIA
BRITANNICA
(14th Edition)

SETS, Etc.

High Prices Paid

ROBERT CHRIS
8 CECIL COURT, LONDON,
W.C.2
TEMPLE BAR 6700

Scottish Art and Letters

No. 1

Editor :
R. Crombie Saunders

Art Editor :
J. D. Fergusson

ARTICLES

SHORT STORIES

POETRY

Contributors

J. F. Hendry on *The Element of Myth in James Joyce*
Robert Melville on *Rousseau and Chirico*.

also

A. S. Neill
Kaikhosru Sorabji
James Bridie
J. D. Fergusson
Fred Urquhart
Morley Jamieson

Adam Drinan
Norman McCaig
W. S. Graham
G. S. Fraser
William Soutar

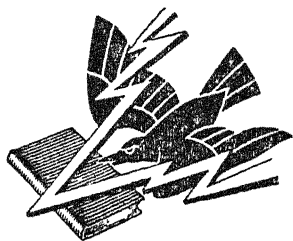
REPRODUCTIONS

by Chirico, Rousseau, also Donald Bain, Marie de Banzie, Isabel Bablanska.

Cover by J. D. Fergusson

5/- (cloth 7/6)

WILLIAM MACLELLAN, 240 Hope Street, Glasgow, C.2



“IF YOU SEE A BOOK

**at a bookseller's which you
like the look of, buy it while
it is there.**

**Books are not rationed, but
good books are scarce.”**

JOHN BETJEMAN in the DAILY HERALD

**HAVE YOU EXCHANGED
ALL YOUR BOOK TOKENS?**

ISSUED BY BOOK TOKENS LIMITED

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

AUGUST

EDITORIAL

1944

I CAME TO the end of my space last month with Sjt. Cooper, whose diary of the Peninsular war I was examining, ill at Guarda. "How long I was there, I know not but rallying again, I was sent off with others on a bullock cart to Celorica, fifteen miles distant. We got on tolerably well until our bullocks took it into their heads to run away. However, the animals stopped when out of breath." The result was "another severe relapse of fever". That was in 1810.

Three years later, after the battle of Pamplona,¹ Cooper was again sent back from the line "in a hot fit of ague". Here he took charge of two officers of his regiment who were mortally wounded. After their death, because "one of my oldest comrades was lying wounded in the next house, soon as possible I set off to see him, carrying some tea, etc. I found him in a large room that was full of wounded—all bad cases. His thigh was broken. I saw that my attention, and his own condition, affected him." "I think," says Cooper, "there was a starting tear in the poor fellow's eye." But he adds firmly, "he might probably recollect his bad behaviour to me on two occasions." Next to him "was a comrade serjeant named Bishop, sadly disfigured with blood and bandages".

This man's wife had "accompanied him in the Peninsula

¹ In 1831 the Duke of Wellington observed, "Those fortresses were got by the enemy in the most infamous manner. Pamplona they took by snow—the garrison were playing at snowballs, and the enemy advanced under pretence of joining in the sport."

for about three or four years". She was not the only woman thus attached to the Army, but as she later left Bishop for a Colonel and had previously been married to a drummer, her military career may be said to have embraced, and that literally, more ranks than most. Cooper records that, at the battle of Toulouse, "a poor fellow I had been talking to at the bridge was now borne along, his leg hanging by a bit of flesh. His wife was killed at Salamanca." At Ustaritz, in one of the most smiling Pyrenean valleys, a soldier's wife, "with two greyhounds in a string, slipped into the river and would have perished had not the dogs saved her by swimming to the shore," and in 1809, another soldier's wife, "after passing through an immense forest of pine trees, nearly all of which were remarkably crooked, was delivered of a child after we had halted for the night. Next morning, she was placed on a horse and marched with the column."

Wives, it will be seen, turn up frequently in the diary; but rarely, it seems to me, where one might expect them in the field. If one is surprised at Mrs. Bishop getting herself "flogged on the breech" for stealing, and at another woman trailing greyhounds through the Pyrenees, one is at least as much surprised to find that neither they nor any of the others appear to have bethought them of such occupations as cooking, nursing, or laundering. The men did these things for themselves. Though married, the women's position was, it is to be presumed, unofficial.

It is true that when Cooper was in hospital at Villa Vicosia, a "woman belonging to our regiment passed my bed". He called to her, gave her some loaves, and asked her to bring a little tea. She took the loaves but "forgot to bring the tea, though she often went by my couch of dried fern". As for cooking, feminine attention might have avoided his unfortunate experience with some captured meal. He tried to make dumplings of it, but

“when boiled, they looked like little frightened hedgehogs” and “to get a mouthful, I had to pick lots of prickles from the mass”—for the meal turned out to be unsifted barley meal, intended for cavalry!

However if A.T.S., N.A.A.F.I., and the other forms of regimentation which our age of freedom has evolved, have altered this aspect of the Army, in others it remains much the same. Here is a type still familiar. “Clapham generally had plenty to eat; but where he got his eatables was quite another thing. He did not tell everyone.” There is “a brother serjeant, a morose fellow, and no friend of mine”. When he was wounded, Cooper helped him up on the adjutant’s horse. “He was shot in the loins or spine. I think he died. Why he was my enemy I never knew”—but, again, we all to our pain have known such. And there is Jack Styles who has been, surely, a member of the British Army from pre-Pistol days to modern tank-times—Jack Styles who “had heard of Heaven and Hell”, so “lend me a coin and I’ll toss up and see which is my place if I fall”.

Wellington had determined to make another grand effort to take Sebastian. “Accordingly, an order was given to every regiment in our division to send one serjeant, one corporal, and twenty privates to assist in storming this strong place.” Cooper volunteered, so did “an old corporal, Jack Styles by name”. He fell, “severely wounded by a musket ball through the knee joint. The struggle was very severe; but our troops succeeded. The town was captured. The old veteran was taken to hospital and told that his leg must be amputated next morning. But when the doctors came, Jack was drunk and said that he and his leg should not be parted. The medical men left him and his leg mended in a contracted state. When strong, he joined us in France. He was a cripple, but did his duty as before and was present afterwards at the

battles of Orthes and Toulouse. Poor old Styles loved drink too well, and had at different times received about two thousand lashes."

That, however, was not so much, as things went. It might only have meant four floggings. "I saw a poor sickly fellow, more fit for the hospital than the triangles, receive 500 lashes at once. His crime was stealing from his comrade." In some cases, "half the sentence was inflicted at once and the remainder when the culprit's back was healed. It may be imagined that the second lashing would be worse than the first." A refinement, the "glasshouse" of the day, was a practice, "most fearful," of flogging by beat of drum. "Ten taps were beaten between each stroke. Many were lashed into insensibility and one, who was a Brunswicker, into insanity. It required," says Cooper, "strong nerves to look on. Indeed, many fainted during these prolonged punishments."

His own opinion on the necessity of them I quoted last month, and it is of interest to notice that his complaints and his concern are mainly with that apparently chronic grouse of the British soldier—food, poor quality of. An entry for 4th November, 1811—"quartered in Campillo, where hunger drove us to seek and eat roasted acorns"—is perhaps an extreme instance. But time and again eatables were short. Thus, after the battle of Vittoria, having taken possession of some hundreds of bullocks and sheep which the enemy had abandoned, "all set to work with coats off and sleeves up. Some killed sheep; others made fat dumplings. A party here was frying chops; another party there smoking tobacco; all happy as princes. At a distance, a selfish few, who had found or had stolen a cask of rum, were drinking copiously." But Sjt. Cooper does not allow these to be happy. It "speedily put them to sleep". Is he, it is possible to wonder, something of a non-commissioned prig—or does he, perhaps, "edit" his notes

with his late-Victorian audience in view? Jack Styles had loved drink "too well"—nevertheless, it had saved his leg—and the rum-drinkers are accused of stealing, though that might have been laid at the door of the sheep-killers and tobacco-smokers as well. The answer is probably not fermented but sour grapes. "Being orderly serjeant, I went not near them." "But I was not idle. I killed three sheep as my share," which seems reasonable, "and baked, or rather burned, several loaves, after which I milked some goats and had a splendid supper."

In 1813, "for the first time in the Peninsula, we kept Christmas. Every man contributed some money, meat, or wine. A sheep or two were bought and killed. Pies and puddings were baked. For desert (*sic*) we had plenty of apples, and for a finish two or three bandsmen played merry tunes, while many warmed their toes by dancing jigs and reels." These were gala occasions. Usually, the tale is of what he calls "stomach complaints". At the battle of the Pyrenees, "we were worn out with fatigue and ravenous with hunger . . . about noon next day we were favoured with some biscuit"—and it is to be noted that Cooper only uses "favoured" to denote scorn. Thus, when he came off duty and was immediately sent to gather some logs, which "logs" had first to be hewn, as they were growing trees, the officer "favoured" him with that unrelished order. Anything that was unpleasant, either too much or too little, was a "favour"—in which we can recognize the tone of to-day's "you've had it". On the retreat to Badajoz, "notwithstanding our weak state through want of food, we had to drag the artillery by ropes up some steep mountains, as horses could not keep on their feet. Men looked like skeletons. Our clothing was in rags and no bread was served out for six days."

In this connection, it is interesting that Wellington was of the opinion that his army was well-fed. As recorded by

Stanhope in his *Conversations*, saying that he had lost 36,000 men in six years in the Peninsular wars, the Duke added, "it would have been infinitely greater but for attention to subsistence. The French armies were made to take their chance and to live as they could and their loss of men was immense". This comes out clearly in de Rocca's *Memoirs*, translated by Maria Graham and published by John Murray in 1815: "On entering Portugal as on quitting it, the French found nothing but deserted towns and empty habitations where there were no provisions." The truth would seem to be that by comparison with the French, the British were well-fed, but it was a poor comparison, and Sgt. Cooper was not in possession of those facts about the enemy army which would have enabled him to make it. He admits that it was in 1806 that "a man should have parted with half his stomach when he entered a soldier's life". Rations in England and Ireland then were a pound and a half of bread, three-quarters of a pound of beef, bone included, for twenty-four hours. "Picking of teeth" in Cooper's phrase, "was not at that time much practised or wanted."

In 1809, abroad, "we were allowed a pound and a half of soft bread, or one pound of biscuit; one pound of beef or mutton; one pint of wine; but no vegetables." Sometimes they were reduced to half-rations "and when bread could not be obtained, we got a pint of unground wheat, or a sheaf from the fields or else two pounds of potatoes". There were "no breakfasts, no suppers, no coffee, no sugar in those days". Nevertheless, Cooper admits fairly enough that supplies improved and, after Torres Vedras, rations were more regularly issued.

The same was true of sleeping arrangements. At the beginning, "tents during this campaign we had none, nor yet blankets," but early in 1813—that is, four years later—there "arrived from England some troops of Life Guards

and Horse Guards Blues, with tents and blankets for all the army". These were issued in May, "at the rate of three tents to a company. The number in each tent was generally about twenty. When these were all laid, none could turn without general consent and the word 'turn' given." When weather was stormy "it sometimes happened that the tent pole broke"; this occurred one "dark wet night" on the slopes of La Rhune. "While a storm raged, the top of the tent pole burst through the rotten cap and down came the dripping tent upon us, with the firelocks, belts, pouches, caps, etc.. in glorious confusion. Some laughed, others did worse. It was no joke"—as those will appreciate who have, like myself, been caught in a storm on La Rhune; even without being, as were Cooper and his comrades, "all naked."

On the siege of Almeida and battle of Albuera, it is again possible to compare Cooper's *Rough Notes* with Wellington's *Conversations*. The former records that "a shell from the French fell into the powder magazine, which was near the ramparts, and blew it up, with some scores of houses near it, thereby making a way for the enemy to enter". A quarter of a century later, Wellington told Stanhope that "it was this blowing up of Almeida and my waiting to see if it would be repaired, that made me too late for Albuera".

The Serjeant in the 7th Royal Fusiliers did not know that; "Wellington arrived from the north of Portugal a few hours after the battle. Had he come sooner we should have had more confidence of victory." Of this, in his turn, Wellington was aware. "Had I been there, we should have made a great thing of it. Marshal Beresford had not as much as myself the habit of responsibility and chief command nor of course, in the same degree, the confidence of the troops. He therefore could not do so much." Further, "I remember he wrote me word that he was

delighted I was coming, that he could not stand the slaughter about him and the vast responsibility. His letter was quite in a desponding tone."

How great was that confidence of the troops enjoyed by Wellington, Cooper frequently shows. At the battle of Busacco, "Wellington and his Staff rode along the line, in full view of the enemy, and were received with great cheering." At the battle of Vittoria, "This quickens our steps and pulses. Wellington and his Staff gallops to a hill in our front and orders up six pieces of artillery, which instantly began blazing away at the enemy, now in full and hasty retreat, Wellington in the meantime glassing the total route of the foe with great earnestness." At the battle of Toulouse, there is a particularly vivid glimpse. "Having had several of my accoutrements stolen, I went among the dead to select such as I wanted. One of the 42nd, or Highland Watch, had a belt that suited me. I also wanted a bayonet, therefore I went in search of one nearer the enemy's skirmishers; but the balls came too thickly to invite my stay there. I looked behind me and saw Lord Wellington riding along the ridge. I knew then the game the enemy aimed at. He took no notice of the whiz, but rode on."

Being now on the field of battle, we may take notice of Cooper's descriptions of fighting. In these he "was greatly assisted by having access to the Regimental Orderly Book". He tells of a night-march, which must have presented an eerie spectacle. "We continued long after dark, stumbling among rocks and stones, the rain still falling and the men silent and knocked up. Several, who had wax candles, lighted them, and we marched by their light." At the battle of Talavera, on the anniversary of which I write, "dawn saw more than 100,000 men standing ready to slay one another. None but those who have been in similar circumstances can even guess what is felt." (The

same thought occurred to him at the battle of Vittoria, "the 21st of June saw 120,000 healthy men rise from their cold beds and prepare to slaughter one another," but here, being now a seasoned soldier, he replaces philosophy with the reflection that "a cup of coffee would have been a treat".)

Talavera did not start off too well. "We retired upon our regiment, which sprung up and met the enemy on rising ground, but our men being all raw soldiers, staggered for a moment under such a rolling fire. Our colonel, Sir William Myers, seeing this, sprang from his horse, and snatching one of the colours cried 'Come on, Fusiliers'. 'Twas enough. In a few minutes, the enemy melted away." Later, "the British guards (*sic*) were brought up, who charged the enemy and swept them back instantly, but pursuing them too far, they suffered heavily before support came up. This was seen by Wellington, who immediately sent forward a fresh body. These in turn charged so roughly that the enemy retired precipitately, leaving heaps of dead and wounded." Again, "in the course of the day, the 6th Dragoons made a dashing charge at the French cavalry but not being aware of a deep ravine between them and the enemy, they went headlong down into it. Not disheartened, the unhurt men galloped up the opposite bank and charged through the enemy's ranks, then wheeling about, they gallantly cut their way back. This was not done without great loss." Then, says Cooper, "the battle now languished. both armies were weary," and during the night, the foe retreated.

After this, as I related, Cooper fell ill. On his rejoining his regiment, there was a pleasing incident, drily told. He and other convalescents had been issued with fresh kit at Elvas, but on arrival at Guarda, the Fusiliers' headquarters, their knapsacks were "lighter" than when they started. "Blankets, greatcoats, shirts, etc., had been sold

on the march and turned into bread, wine, etc." They were inspected, the Colonel having a list of what had been issued to them. "'Where is your blanket?'" 'Stolen, sir.' 'How?'" 'I was cook that day, sir, and while fetching water, it disappeared.' 'Indeed.' Then, speaking to the second, 'Where is your greatcoat?'" 'Lost in quarters, sir.' 'Very strange.' Speaking to the third respecting his missing shirt, the answer was, 'Worn out, sir.' The Colonel smiled. We knew that smile. There was bitterness in it. At last he sarcastically said, 'It astonishes me that you Light Company Men, sly and keen as you are, should have been so unfortunate.' What astonished us was that we escaped flogging."

At the battle of Busacco, we read that "while the contest was raging, sixteen or seventeen deserters, chiefly Germans, came over to us". In the enemy's retreat of 1811, we are told that "straw sentries were left behind, to deceive us" and that "scorched earth" policy was brought into play—"the track of their march might be discovered by smoking towns and villages."

On our retreat to the lines of Torres Vedras, "Distressing were the scenes. Thousands and tens of thousands of the Portuguese crowded the narrow roads to Lisbon, frequently mixing with and impeding the retreating army." At Vittoria, the roads were again blocked, but this time it was with "numerous carriages belonging to ladies and gentlemen" who had driven over, to have what is now called a grandstand view, of the English being beaten!

At the siege of Badajoz, there is a situation which calls for Nym's and Bardolph's comments. "While our company was in the trenches waiting for the engineer to stake out some more work, a party sat down to play cards in the trench. My duty was to warn the men of coming shot or shell. A burst of smoke: I bawled out 'Take care'; whew, whew, *whew*. The shell strikes the ground, rebounds, rolls

up the outside of the parapet and falls over the shoulder of a man whose name was Arundel, into the trench between his legs. A scramble ensued. A soldier seized the shell and threw it out of the trench."

Here, Cooper was made a serjeant. The fact is laconically chronicled. "Death had made room enough." He had then been in the Army for six years. He had signed on for seven. But his regiment did not return to England till June, 1814. Cooper was then the victim of a series of small mischances which added up to one big disappointment. "The period of my service being within three weeks of its termination, I looked for my liberation every day. According to my wishes the order to discharge all the seven years' men arrived, and the documents were written out forthwith." They anchored next to the *Chesapeake* which had been captured some time before by the *Shannon*. He saw his brother, with his discharge in his pocket, going ashore from a neighbouring ship. His own discharge had been made out by the clerks and "nothing was wanted to set us free but the Colonel's signature. Unfortunately, the Colonel was ashore." And the next thing that happened was that an order came "for our regiment to embark immediately on a secret expedition".

He did not return from that until May, 1815. "At daylight on Whitsunday morning, we discovered a French ship. We bore down alongside and hailed, 'What news have you?' 'Buonaparte has escaped from Elba and got to Paris, where he has 20,000 men in arms.'" Cooper forgets to be the prim serjeant. He says simply, "My stars, what a sensation!" Others take immemorial pleasure in telling him, "You seven years' men will never get off now."

On entering the English Channel they ran into a gale, but anchored at Spithead on 31st May. "No sooner had the telegraph indicated our arrival to the War Office than an order was sent by the same medium that we should

sail immediately to Ostend and join Wellington at Brussels."

However—"in the afternoon, all the seven years' men were discharged; we got our papers and were free." He thus arrived home a fortnight before the Battle of Waterloo—tantalizingly enough for us, but no doubt pleasurably for him. But he does not suffer himself to leave the Army without one last grouse, for "after all our services, we were not favoured" (notice the word!) "with boats to take us ashore: therefore we hired them".

And then what happened? "In 1818 I applied personally to Marshal Sir John Beresford respecting my obtaining a pension. The answer was, 'The rules are now so stringent that no limited service man can claim a pension unless he has been wounded'." Cooper had had it, for though he had been in hospital on and off during his campaigning, he had not been wounded. The nearest he came to it was at La Rhune. "Skirmishers below kept firing at us through a hedge. This was not pleasant as we had no orders to return the compliment. While this ugly fun was going on a comrade serjeant and I lay down close together, as the weather was cold, and began talking, when suddenly my friend cried out, 'O, I've caught it!' A ball had gone through his thigh. Another pennyweight of powder and it would have entered my premises."

So Cooper had no wound, and got no pension. He applied again in 1833, and then, in 1865, "I tried a third time and obtained one shilling a day." That was fifty years after his discharge, and it is to be hoped that his fate in the meantime had not been that of the character in *Love and a Bottle*—"Five years a Soldier and fifteen a Beggar! An age of Damnation for a Momentary Offence!" Farquhar's play was written nearly a century before Cooper joined the Army; it makes no matter, the remark holds good.

By the same token, two remarks made by contemporaries of Serjeant Cooper, are not without application to-day ; and a sad comment it is that they should be. The first is from Wellington, who said of the foe of his time, " His plan was always to gain a great victory, patch up a peace, such a peace as might leave an opening for a future war " ; and the second is from de Rocca, who, writing in his *Memoirs* of the Peninsular war, which he reached from Germany, " where the constant submission of each and everyone to the orders of a single one, continually pressed down the springs of individual character," found it true then, as there are signs to-day that it may be again, that the rulers of Germany " turned all their views towards perfecting those military institutions which might secure their authority and serve their personal ambition ; but in accustoming their subjects to a minutely punctual obedience, they had weakened the national character, which is the only invincible bulwark that nations can oppose to foreign invaders ".

I make way for Captain Clewes's diary of another campaign of the same Army one hundred and thirty years after Cooper left it.

FROM AN ITALIAN DIARY

By HOWARD CLEWES

WE ROUNDED PUNTA LICOSA at about midnight and came into Salerno Bay. The stars were very bright but there was no moon and the sea was quite calm. A long way to the north the other convoy was being attacked from the air, and though you could see the red tracer spouting lazily across the sky and the gay flares hanging over the sea, you could hear no sound of the battle. We were not attacked then. On the shore to the east there was a fire ; it looked like a house or a building of some kind ; the red flames danced on the smooth water and as its intensity did not diminish during the whole night, we supposed it must have been some kind of signal ; for us it had no particular significance. In any case, we thought, it did not matter greatly : the Italians had capitulated and there would be no opposition. Indeed we were rather surprised to be landing in Salerno Bay at all. We were extremely happy. We did everything light-heartedly.

There was no sound. We drifted, waiting. The sea slapped pleasantly at the waterline. Somebody had left the wireless on below and we could hear music faintly. We seemed to wait a long time.

The ship's Number One, who had a fine red beard and an impressive flow of language, supervised the work of unloading the amphibians into the sea. They were picked up one by one and dropped over the side, spinning slowly on the end of the cable, like plump spiders. It was unbelievably efficient. The amphibian we used carried a radio with a wooden housing built over it so that in the water it looked rather like one's childhood conception of Noah's Ark. We hit the sea very hard and for a moment I thought we were going under ; the water sucked and gurgled at the belly of the craft. We could not see the

thin cable, only the vast impassive flank of the ship against the stars. A long way above us a voice called, "You all right?" and when we said yes, fine, he said, "Then cast off the obscene cable," and we released the hook and started up the engine and nudged into the side of the ship. The hook soared up away from us and we could hear the derrick distantly. We saw the next vehicle in a moment turning slowly against the sky above us and we edged down the side of the ship towards the bows where the others were, like chickens round a contented hen, and made fast to the scrambling nets there. Then we waited again.

We lay under the side of the ship drifting with her, having the feeling that the land was moving, not the ship. I remember being disturbed and a little petulant about this, for I had got used to the way things looked when we had first been dropped over the side, and now it all looked quite different. The fire on the shore had disappeared, the Pole Star was in a different place, the ships lying quietly on the water near us had all gone. The stock of the automatic rifle I was holding was still warm from the sun we had sailed under in the day. Then above somebody shouted and we left the side of the ship. The breeze was warm.

A little way ahead of us there was another amphibian whose wake shone in the black water and the driver followed it. It was going very fast and you could smell the exhaust. Then I saw the others, all round us. We looked for the flashing light we were to follow and could not see it; neither the light, nor the fire on the shore, nor anything but the sparkling wakes, and there was no way of telling whether we were going towards the shore or not. We lit cigarettes furtively and told Johnson the driver to get out of the wake of the amphibian we were following, there was a lot of water coming over the side. When you stood up and looked over the stern, over the clumsy radio housing, you could see others following.

Then we swerved to avoid the vehicle ahead of us, for it had come to a standstill and lay wallowing on the sea, and when we called, "What's the matter?" he said nothing was the matter, for Christ's sake don't come so close. They had all stopped. There were more on the water than you could count. Now and then they started up their engines and careered about, shouting to one another and bumping and jostling, nobody knowing why the others had stopped. Almost at once we lost such formation as we might have had and officers began calling out the names of their units, infantry and engineers and anti-tank and anti-aircraft, hopelessly intermingled, seeking their sub-units, and commanders and demanding where the hell was the naval launch whose flashing light we were supposed to be following. Then we began to move again. A bold yellow light shone for a moment a long way in front of us, to the east, and we thought maybe that was Yellow Beach and turned towards it.

We stopped again after a few minutes. There was a lot more shouting. We drifted for a long time. The sea became quite rough and it began to get light and Mount Capaccio was outlined dimly against the dawn. We were about two miles offshore when the firing began. We could see the red tracer flashing against the hills and the fulsome explosion of mortars drifted over the bristling sea. Smoke hung above the beach all the way round the bay to the north and through the morning mist the white faces of Agropoli peered down to the bay from the hill to the south. A machine-gun tapped daintily at the mountains over which the sun rose like the head of God to see what it was we wanted. In the foothills of Capaccio we could see clearly the flashes of the 88 millimetres firing at us. They were all round us now, in a semicircle and it must have been very agreeable for them, for we were a dream of a target, all heading in line astern for Yellow Beach, a long line of

amphibians on the water ; they did not even have to alter their range.

We turned away to starboard—one is never sure whether to use nautical terminology or not with amphibians—but that made us only the more conspicuous, for, with our radio housing and our doubtful solitude, we must have looked like some kind of Command vessel, and the shells began to fall very close. Some of the amphibians were hit.

After the initial assault nobody landed on Yellow beach. The enemy waited for the first troops to land and then opened fire while they tried to get through the minefields there. There were one or two naval vessels firing over our heads at the eighty-eights in the hills, but it took a long time. A shell struck the water a few yards away from us and the blast knocked me off the seat and a splinter went through the radio housing. My ears sang.

Then a sloop went past us and on almost into the surf and, turning sharply to the north, sailed calmly round the bay laying a smoke screen. We could see it engaging the tanks on the shore. We went into the screen and shut off the engines and ate breakfast, a K-ration each.

We landed on Red beach. The sea was choppy on the way in and we shipped a lot of water, going fast for the shore with shells landing all round us. There was some wreckage in the surf and a broken landing craft drifted northwards with the tide. I felt the wheels take hold of the sand and we rose out of the water and trundled up the beach towards the gap in the dunes where the engineers were laying netting to make a road. There were some dead on the sand and the eighty-eights were concentrating their fire on the narrow gap in the dunes where the road was under construction. Somebody shouted to us to get the amphibian to hell away from there, it was drawing fire. We agreed. A couple more shells landed among the debris in the surf and one hit the sand ahead of us sending up a

big fountain. We heard the plane diving. There was a boy lying on the beach with the stump of his leg pointing up into the air heavily bandaged and when he heard the plane coming down at him he screamed and tried to crawl on his hands and knees into the dunes but the plane got him in the back of the head and he kicked for a moment before he died. The fifty millimetres and the little flakship in the bay opened fire and the noise was blinding. The Messerschmidt glittered prettily in the morning sunshine going right along the beach, firing all the way.

We reached the tobacco factory a little before nightfall. It consisted of a series of warehouses or drying sheds from whose ceilings the leaves hung. The smell was pleasant. In the grounds there were a number of cottages used by the employees. We entered one and told the tired Italian woman we found there that we were going to stay and would pay all right. She was very bewildered and frightened. She had had eighteen children and a diploma to that effect, signed by Mussolini, and distinctly phallic in design; it hung in the dining-room. Not that a diploma was in any way necessary: there they were. Indeed there were so many children and soon so many war correspondents in the little house that the unfortunate woman had some difficulty in telling one from the other. In this she was not alone.

That was at Paestum.

Later, we moved to Pontecagnano, to a fruit warehouse full of walnuts in sacks, after the fall of Battipaglia.

The ground shook a little under the weight of the tanks passing through the crowds in the gaunt streets standing on the fallen masonry and rubble among the ruins. The dust they raised glittered in the sunshine and soon everybody was covered with a film of white dust. People threw bottles of wine to the crews in the turrets and sometimes threw

badly so that the bottles hit and burst against the sides and the wines ran streaming down the turrets of the tanks. There was a lot of clapping and cheering and weeping and the girls threw flowers on the road under the tracks. The driver of the truck we were in pulled up and got out and squared up to the men who were kissing his face and hands and said if another bastard kissed him he would break his bloody nose. There was still a lot of sniping in the back streets and now and then we could hear the hesitant chatter of machine guns out along the coast road. The old man lay against the wall of the station in the shadow. The blood had dried on the paving stones round his head and there were plenty of flies. He was still wearing his hat, which was grey. Under his arm there was an umbrella whose handle was carved in the shape of the head of a foxcub with yellow stones for eyes that shone through the leaves of the branch somebody had thrown over him. Nobody disturbed him. There were many people passing, up and down the Corso Umberto. The ground trembled. It was very bright and cheerful. People were firing rifles into the air and throwing German bombs they had found. Everybody was pleased. The whole city was pleased. We went right through the city towards the Volturmo.

The light in the tent was brown. The rain pattered daintily on the canvas, sometimes loudly, when the wind blew. Outside we could see the wet earth going away up the valley and through the open flap at the other end of the tent, the ambulance coming up the hillside through the mud. We could hear the battle up the valley, there was a good deal of machine-gun fire, mostly German thirty-fours, and the dull explosion of our own mortars and the barrage going over our heads whispering. In the tent there was a smell of ether and blood and wet clothes and the two doctors, both of whom wore glasses, had their

sleeves rolled up. Everything was covered with a film of moisture. We spoke to the orderly whose bald head shone in the brown light and he said they were mostly Germans to-day. The one in the corner spoke French, he said. The man opened his eyes when we leaned over the stretcher. He was very young and had fair hair and a brown stubble on his chin. He was wounded in both thighs and had had two plasma units, the orderly said. His face was wet with the rain and there were raindrops on the blanket that covered him.

"Comment vous sentez-vous?"

He opened his eyes and looked from one to the other of us.

"Mieus."

"Où avez-vous fait la guerre?"

He raised his shoulders a little. "Stalingrad."

"Et en Italie."

"Oui. J'y suis."

"Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous mobilisé?"

"Depuis six ans." Rain dripped through the canvas on to the blanket. "Je suis fatigué."

After a time we went back up the valley towards the fight there.

In the desolate city the representatives of the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrat Party and the Action Party and the Socialist Party and the Communist Party and those in favour of Labour Democracy met in committee. They had no power and nothing to do except talk, but they talked very well indeed. Count Sforza was in the city also, and the wise Benedetto Croce, and Adolfo Omodeo, who was the rector of the university, and the Marshal. Finally, the King was there.

On this day the sun shone brightly over the ruins. In the clear light they were naked and abrupt and unlovely.

The streets were crowded with people who had nothing to do and some of them went to the university where there was a celebration about how to-day was the anniversary of the armistice with Austria. The proceedings were organized by the Rector, and though pretty well everybody knew about the celebration taking place except the military authorities, called the Amateur Military Gentlemen On Tour, who were the people who ought to have known about it most, very few knew what the celebration was for and there was not much popular feeling. At about three o'clock in the afternoon a shop for gentlemen in the Via Roma which was doing very well selling silk pyjamas to the soldiery, hung out a flag from the window of the first floor and then the man who had done it sat and stared at the people in the street below for a long time from the window. He had a bottle of wine and occasionally took a pull at it.

The Marshal, who said the King ought not to abdicate, conferred with the committee, who said the King would damn well have to abdicate, especially Eugenio Reale, the representative of the Communist party, and then addressed the press saying he had an open mind about everything except in the matter of the question asked by the correspondents of the Isolationists newspapers to which he replied that he was a soldier and not a politician and would shoulder his musket with the best of them or for that matter with the people generally.

At the celebration in the university Count Sforza in his speech remarked on the significance of the occasion and thanked the Rector for his efforts on behalf of democracy and one thing and another and said that all those people tainted with fascism ought to be punished or at least not allowed to have it all their own way, as in the past. This was taken to be an allusion to His Majesty and there was some applause which was multiplied several times by the

Count's friends who were also in the audience by chance and by the electrical public address system installed for the occasion by A branch of the Allied Headquarters.

At this time it was illegal for anyone to make political speeches. (The Count held that what he had said was not political but a fact.) It seemed that the Branch ought to have informed the Amateur Military Gentlemen On Tour of the Count's intention to speak politically or indeed at all or the Rector ought to have done so or maybe the Count himself or anyway somebody; the Branch ought to have known better. Had the Amateur Military Gentlemen been told they could have prohibited the whole thing in accordance with normal practice and the rules they had drawn up and they were frightfully browned off, they said. However, the Rector was firmly rebuked.

Meanwhile the King, who had been lunching with some old friends of his who were Allied generals, was touring the city in order to test popular reaction to his presence, if any, and see for himself whether the people desired his abdication or not. Whether by accident or with considerable malice or maybe just for the hell of it, the Transport Officer of the organization which loaned the King the car he was to tour the city in selected the vehicle for its size rather than with regard to His Majesty's personal stature. The car was tremendous and the King was not. The windows were so high and the seat so low that not only could the King not see out but the people couldn't see in. It was then too late to send the car back and ask for another so a couple of velvet cushions were provided for the royal seat. During the tour he kept slipping off, however, and just as he was about to be acclaimed or maybe abused by such of his subjects as noticed him, and they were as few as they were incredulous, he would suddenly disappear from sight, which was unusually confusing. It was during one such unhappy contretemps, which took place outside

the shop in the Via Roma that was doing very well selling silk pyjamas to the soldiery, that the man, an Englishman, who had hung out the flag to celebrate the armistice with Austria, took a long pull at the bottle of wine he was drinking and remarked, "Lewis, where art thou?"

When the King reached the university, coincidentally with the close of the celebrations there, a number of people saw him and greeted him with loud cries either of "Viva il rey!" which means long live the king, or "Via il rey!" which means, very simply, away with the king. But when these shibboleths are shouted in unison by a crowd of excited citizens there is great difficulty in telling them apart. The ensuing discussion did not last long; Eugenio Reale, the representative of the Communist Party, said they said, "Via il rey!" and had many supporters, and the King said they said, "Viva il rey!" but only the King said so.

On the Garigliano that afternoon George Goodacre who was a gamekeeper by profession and what the French call a "simple soldat" was out by himself on a patrol because he could use ground so well, and was hit by a mortar bomb. He was found in the grey mud on the river bank. I knew him before the war. He was a good fellow.

POEMS FROM HEINE'S "DIE NORDSEE"

Translated by VERNON WATKINS

FIRST CYCLE

I

Coronation

SONGS, MY STALWART songs,
 Up, up, and arm yourselves !
 Let the trumpets sound,
 And proclaim for me in chivalry
 This young girl
 Who is now about to rule
 My entire heart, as queen.

Hail to you, you young queen !

From the sun up there
 I tear, refulgent, the red gold,
 And weave out of it a crown
 For your consecrated head.
 From the shot, blue-silken covering of heaven
 In which the night-diamonds glitter
 I cut a precious piece
 And hang it as coronation-robe for you
 Around your regal shoulders.
 I give you a court-attendance
 Of stiffly attired sonnets,
 Proud terzinas and elegant stanzas.
 As runner my wit will serve you,
 As court-fool my fantasy,
 As herald, laughter's armed tear in irony,
 My humour will serve you.
 But I myself, queen,

I kneel before you,
And in homage, on the red velvet cushion,
I present to you
The little morsel of understanding
Left me, still, out of pity,
By your predecessor in the kingdom.

2

Evening Dusk

ON THE PALE strand of the sea
I sat, troubled with thoughts and lonely.
The sun sank deeper, and threw
Red-glowing bands on the water,
And the white, wide waves,
Pressed by the incoming tide,
Foamed and rushed forward, nearer and nearer—
A weird rush of sounds, a whispering and piping,
A laughing and murmuring, sighing and whistling,
And between them in secret a lullaby-singing—
To me it re-echoed like long-lost sagas,
Like earliest, beautiful stories
That I, once, as a boy,
Would hear from the neighbours' children,
When we, in the Summer evening,
Squatted on the stone steps to the door,
Listening to the quiet tales
With small, attentive hearts
And shrewdly questioning eyes ;
While the tall, grown girls
Beside fragrant flower-pots
Sat over there at the window,
Rose-faces,
Smiling and caught by the moon.

3

Sunset

THE GLOWING RED sun drops
Down into the wide, uproarious,
Silver-grey sea of the world;
Creatures of air, rose-tinged by the breath,
Surge towards him; and over against them,
Out of the twilight's autumnal cloud-veils,
A mournful, death-pale countenance,
Breaks into sight the moon,
And behind her, flickering scintillations,
Out in the mist, sparkle the stars.

Once in the heavens glittered,
Conjugally joined,
Luna, the goddess, and Sol, the god,
And around them swarmed the stars,
The little, innocent children.

But evil tongues began whispering of discord,
And then divided in enmity
The lofty, radiant wedded pair.

Now in the day, in lonely splendour,
There in the height the sun-god goes,
For his great glory
Prayed to and honoured much in song
By proud men hardened by fortune's favour,
But at night
Through the heavens wanders Luna,
The wretched mother

With her destitute star-children,
And she gleams in unuttered sorrow,
And girls in love and tender poets
Pledge to her tears and songs.

Weak Luna ! With a woman's nature
Still she loves the magnificent groom.
Towards evening, trembling and pale,
She peeps from behind light cloud,
And gazes after the departing one, bitterly,
As if she would call him poignantly : " Come !
Come ! The children long for you—"
But the defiant sun-god,
At the sight of the spouse he flushed
In redoubled crimson
With anger and pain,
And inexorably he hastened down
Into his sea-cold widower's bed.

Evil, whispering tongues
Brought, then, pain and dissolution
Even to eternal gods.
And the wretched gods, high in the heavens,
Go, full of torment,
Comfortless, never-ending journeys,
And cannot die,
And with them they trail
Their radiant misery.

But I, the man,
The lowly-planted, the death-endowed,
I complain no longer.

5

Poseidon

THE SUNBEAMS PLAYED
Over the sea rolling out into distance ;
Far-off at anchor sparkled the ship
Which was to bear me home ;
But still there was no good wind for sailing,
And still I sat peacefully on a white dune
By the lonely beach,
And I read the song of Odysseus,
The old, the forever youthful song,
Out of whose leaves inspired with sea-sound
Rose to me joyfully
The breath of the gods,
And the radiant Springtime of men
And the blossoming sky of Hellas.

My noble heart accompanied faithfully
The son of Laertes, in wanderings and trouble,
Sat down with him, disturbed in soul,
At the welcoming hearth
Where queens spin purple,
And helped him to lie and escape by luck
From caves of giants and arms of nymphs,
Followed him on to Cimmerian darkness,
And in storm and shipwreck,
And suffered with him untellable misery.

Sighing I spoke : " You wicked Poseidon,
Your anger is terrible,
And I myself am in fear
For my own homecoming."

I had hardly said the words
When the sea foamed up,
And out of the white waves rose
The reed-crowned head of the sea-god,
And scornfully he called :

“ Never fear, little poet !
I will not at all imperil
Your poor little ship,
And I will not alarm your precious life
With all-too hazardous rolling.
For you, little poet, have never angered me,
No single turret have you disfigured
At Priam’s holy banquet-hall,
Not one little hair have you singed
On the eye of my son Polyphemus,
And you, never with counsel has guarded
The goddess of prudence, Pallas Athene.”

So called out Poseidon
And dived back into the sea ;
And over his clumsy seaman’s-wit
Laughed under the water
Amphitrite, the ponderous fish-wife,
And the stupid daughters of Nereus.

IO

Sea-Apparition

I, HOWEVER, LAY at the rim of the ship,
And gazed, with dreaming eye,
Down into the mirror-clear water,
And gazed deeper and deeper—
Till deep, far down in the depth of the sea,
At first like dawning mist,

Yet gradually more distinctly coloured,
Churches' domes and towers revealed themselves,
And at last, clear as sunlight, a whole town,
Antique, in the style of the Netherlands,
And bustling with men.
Reflective men, black-coated,
With white ruffs and chains of honour
And long swords and long faces,
Go striding over the teeming market place
To the town-hall raised high above steps,
Where stony images of kings
Keep watch with sceptre and sword.
Not far away, before long house-rows
Where mirror-dull windows are,
And lime-trees cut in the form of pyramids,
Young girls go walking in rustling silk,
Slender figures, their sweet flower-faces
Chastely enclosed in little black caps
And escaping, flowing gold hair.
Bright-coloured lads in Spanish costume
Go proudly past and bow.
Aged women
In brown, outmoded garments,
Hymn-book and rosary in their hands,
Hurry, with quick little steps,
Towards the great cathedral,
Spurred by the chiming of bells
And the surging sound of the organ.

Me, too, seizes the distant clangour's
Mysterious dolour.
Endless longing, deep-searching sorrow
Steals into my heart,
My scarcely healed heart;—
To me it seems that its wounds were being

Kissed open by dear lips
And started again to bleed—
Hot, red drops,
That long and slowly fall
On an old house, down there
In the deep-sunk sea-town,
On an old high-gabled house
That is gloomily empty of people,
Only that there at the lower window
A girl sits,
With her head at rest on her arm,
Like a poor, forgotten child—
And I know you, poor, forgotten child !

So deep, ocean-deep, then,
You hid yourself from me
Out of childish fancy,
And could not come up any more,
And sat strange among strange people,
Centuries long,
While I, my soul full of sorrow,
Over the whole Earth sought you,
And constantly sought you,
You constantly-loved one,
You long, long-lost one,
You finally-found one—
I, I have found you and see again
Your dear, sweet face,
The wise, faithful eyes,
The tender smile,—
And never, never again will I leave you,
And I come down to you,
And with outstretched arms
I dive down, down to your heart—

But at the right moment quickly
Gripped me by the foot the captain,
And pulled me back from the ship's rail,
And cried, bitterly laughing :
" Doctor, are you stark crazy ? "

II

Purification

STAY IN YOUR depth of sea,
Delirious dream,
You that once so many a night
Tortured my heart with deceiving pleasure
And now in the shape of a sea-ghost
Still in the clearness of day would threaten me—
Stay down there, to eternity,
And I throw down after you
All my torments and sins,
And the skull-cap-and-bells of folly
That around my head so long has tinkled,
And the cold, resplendent snake-skin
Of dissimulation
That has wound itself so long round my soul,
My sick soul,
My God-disowning, angel-disowning,
Unhappy soul—
Hoy ho ! Hoy ho ! Here comes the wind.
Up with the sails ! They flutter and swell.
Over the silent, corruptible surface
Speeds the ship,
And the soul rejoices, freed.

HAVEN

By DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON

PURLING AWAKES, AS he had fully expected to do, within the deepest depths of peace. His eyes take in symmetrical oblongs of window-curtain, densely patterned, yet transparent enough to admit, last night, the sky's faint glimmer and, this morning, golden light.

Urged out of bed by a sudden busy cheeping and scrabbling of sparrows, he feels beneath his feet the carpet's soft, clean surface and, in his mind, the dawn of a resolve: in this sequestered house, discovered by following his nose, and immediately announcing itself as his destination, he will remain aloof from his surroundings, keep the compass of his being firmly set, and thus achieve the concentration needed for the work in hand.

Ankle-deep in his splash-bath, he finds himself whistling with the liveliness of a guest hurrying to be breakfasting, amongst friends, in the glow of an overnight unity. Quelling the inappropriate mood born of the room's guest-chamberly air, he recalls his expanded being to its centre. "Shaving-water. Breakfast in fifteen minutes."

The woman's voice had reached him more directly through the closed door than when, face to face, he had asked his few questions and noted the tonelessness of her replies. Yet even when slightly raised it revives his impression of her as a being serene and negative. The inevitable meeting and greeting will not dim, before he can use it, his morning clarity.

Clinkings, along the passage, of a carried trayful of crockery. Silence. The tinkle of a Swiss cowbell, muted, sweet. Her retreating footsteps. Breakfast is waiting. After breakfast he can hide, in here, while she clears, postpone meeting and conversation until later. The morning is safe.

Warm room. Fire cheerily burning. Savoury break-

fast pleasantly set out. Stillness so perfect that he might be alone in the house.

His second cup of tea suggests that she may presently appear to inquire if he would like more hot water. But she does not appear. He finishes his breakfast blissfully alone with the world in clear focus all about him, all he knows, all he has experienced, newly alive and available in virtue of this so blessedly unthreatened depth of concentration.

With the door wide open, he swings the little bell, sets it down upon the table, and retreats to his bedroom, shutting himself in with a soundfulness sufficient to reach the back premises. Hears Miss Tillard come down the passage and presently retire with her clinking trayful.

The odour of breakfast has gone, and the enervating, cosy glow surrounding him as he fed is replaced by a warm freshness. She has opened one of the top-lights and made up the fire. Upon the cleared table stands the little bell. Her deputy. Unless summoned she will not appear.

Mind and body abruptly failing, he relaxes in his chair to emit, in comfort, a long sigh of relief. Like a diver emerging from deep water with open eyes, he becomes aware of the forgotten room and of its stillness, broken now by his movements as he gathers up his scattered sheets, seeing, ahead, to-morrow and its morning; an unnumbered series of to-morrows as good as to-day.

Will it be possible? Is Miss Tillard, at last, the ideal landlady? Will she, at the end of a fortnight, still be remote? A fortnight; usually the outside limit. In all his wanderings, sooner or later, gradually or suddenly, the current landlady's personality has flowed in upon him, demanding attention like a presented bill. Failure to honour the bill has bred an ever-threatening hostility. Destructive.

"Four conversaciones per day," he groans in his weak-

ness. Even with Miss Tillard, featureless and withholding as she seems to be, it will presently come to that. Prison. Prison is the only complete refuge. And perhaps even a gaoler, in the end, makes his demands? She is gentle. Up to a point, cultured. It may be possible to make rigorous terms. State, exactly, the demands of one's work. But not until after lunch. If now she were to enter the room, I should smile myself, a happy convalescent, into her hands. Returning my inane smile, she would imagine that in her new lodger she had found a friend, or a child.

Glancing at the clock, he sees that she may indeed arrive at any moment now with the food he so eagerly desires. Hurriedly he sweeps his belongings on to a side table and decamps, again opening and shutting doors with deliberate soundfulness.

In the shelter of his bedroom he looks out upon a sunlit expanse. Unemotionally; seeing it merely as the afternoon's exercise ground, and again sighs his happiness. For this absence of interest in an unknown countryside is sure evidence of the favourable state. An afternoon's restorative tramping, a little work after a leisurely tea. No reading. Above all, no reading. After supper a meditative pipe or so, and then early to bed with forces canalized for to-morrow.

When presently the little bell sounds its summons, he seems to have heard it from that blessed sanctuary a hundred times before, and turns serenely, fully armed, towards lunch and landlady. Lunch indeed is there, but Miss Tillard already has vanished.

After an excellent meal whose cold second course had been set upon the table with the rest, he feels almost eager to see and somehow to express gratitude. Placing a fireside chair so that he will be sitting sideways to the rest of the room, he rings the bell and sits down with his pipe, fully prepared for the inevitable interview. A gentle tap, and here she is.

Her serene " Good afternoon " is less of a greeting than a prelude to the further words which almost drown his response. " I want a list of the things you don't like. Onions, for example," and she reels off, while busily clearing the table, a brief catalogue. Assuring her of a catholic taste, he is about to become complimentary when she begins again. " Then I'll continue to prelude your breakfast with a cereal and fruit, and sometimes there shall be fruit or a savoury for lunch instead of a sweet. Anyhow, variety. At the end of a week I'll consult you once more." Leaving him no time to respond, she hurries on: " I'll give you tea at half-past four, say toast and honey and a scrap of home-made cake? And supper at nine?"

" That will suit me perfectly." She is gathering up the tablecloth. In a moment she will be gone. Now is the time. But again her voice breaks in.

" I didn't suggest late dinner, which, of course, if you prefer—"

Immediately voicing his disclaimer, he turns fully round, to face her while expressing the amplitude of his general appreciation, only to find, already between them, the opened door.

" Principal meal at midday seems to fit country life." For the first time, her level voice, slightly raised behind the sheltering door, has a ring of something like vitality. " And a latish supper shortens the evening." Upon her last word, the door is gently closed.

For days he sees her no more. His dream is realized. Here, at last, is indeed the perfect landlady. Better, even, than the trained deaf-mute for whom, again and again, he has despairingly yearned. The whole of his being is turned, untapped, upon his enterprise. Each morning finds him ardently at work. Each afternoon he flings himself into the open. Breathing the moistly soft air of a mild January, he

walks swiftly, heedless of his surroundings, welcoming the early fall of darkness that is the herald of to-morrow. Daily, at some moment on his tour, his eyes are called, his senses challenged: by the last sun-ray, madder-rose upon a crumbling gatepost, a leaf of hornbeam, burning out its gold upon a stripped hedge. From such things he turns swiftly away, feeling the joy they evoke flow back into his being; restorative.

The third week brings cold. On its last morning a dense grey sky is shedding hesitant flakes upon a world grown white in a single night. The even, lurid light banishes the sense of time. The further spaces of the landscape have vanished behind a thick grey curtain. Perfection of enclosure. The writer's paradise. As he rises from the breakfast table, Purling finds himself drawn to the window. Flouting an inward protest against any departure from the set pattern of his daily movements, he goes down the room to pay, within the spectral light of the window-space, a moment's tribute to his benefactors. Exhilarated by the chill given off by the panes and woodwork, he stands bewitched, watching the eddying flakes hover, as if of set purpose to beguile; each young flake seeming aware of the magic effectiveness of its irregular movement, the ecstatic quality of the suspense created by its apparent hesitancy between coming to rest upon earth and wavering upward to hover once more amidst a ceaseless company. In a moment desire rises within him, for another witness; for someone to share and to reflect his exultation.

Here he stands, a truant, a boy caught by a spectacle, unable to escape. In vain he tells himself to retreat as usual to his room across the passage. The inner tumult, refusing to subside, turns him on his heel. He tinkles the little bell and goes back to his post at the window.

Stillness. Isolation with the muffled landscape and the silent house. Away in her kitchen, before whose window

the snow will be falling unnoticed, she listens, inanimate, for the closing of his bedroom door. Shall he ring again? Composedly she will advance down the passage to stand in the doorway, destroying, while she awaits a statement of his needs, the last remnant of his delight.

Escaping into memory, he finds mother Shabley with him in the room, hurling into space as she lumbers about collecting his breakfast things, the outcries that will have rung through the house since dawn. Again he savours the relief he had known whenever exaggerated weather had supplied a topic for the inevitable morning interview. Once more he hears its daily accompaniment: the clatter announcing from upstairs the armed occupation of his bedroom. No refuge.

Here, all day long, is refuge; peace. Calling to him from the depths of this warm room, from the bracing chill of his empty bedroom across the passage. Cursing his moment's folly, he strides across to its shelter, closing its door with the usual signalling soundfulness, and strolls over to its window. The snowstorm is now in full swing. Large, mature flakes drive down, indifferently, thick and fast upon a busy errand that is no concern of his.

Restored to his fireside, he awaits, smoking a savourless pipe, the return of serenity. The room seems small, stuffy. Kept there by the absence of the vital stream usually flowing in through the top-light, the odour of breakfast still hangs about. To banish preoccupation he paces to and fro, keeping his eyes downcast lest they betray him into investigating the still unfamiliar furniture. Turning for the third time from the welcome chill of the window-space, he knows himself on the way back to his centre. Within his emptied consciousness is the stirring of desire to be at work. When he reaches the fireside he will collect and, in the character of servitor, lay out his materials. Then one more journey to the window and back. By that time his

detachment will be complete. He is still a stranger, still nowhere and unknown. Mercifully, Miss Tillard is unaware of his escapade.

"Damnation ! I'm still all over the place." There it is, clear in his mind, placed there by a sudden treachery of the eyes : a complete picture of the room, its proportions, every detail of its furniture, a suite, one of identical millions.

Shocked by the bitter animosity within him, he makes for the fire, resolutely knocks out his half-smoked pipe, pits against imagination's tumult the leisurely sounds of preparation for work and presently is seated, more or less serene, but unable any longer to draw inspiration from the very air of the unknown room. Wearily he sees ahead a daily battle for concentration amidst the contemptuous silence of the affronted furniture.

Pen in hand, he re-reads yesterday's pages and presently is drawing comfort from the swiftness of his discovery of what is wrong with a passage marked for revision. So it is to be one of those days, intermittent, usually produced by fatigue, when the reservoir is closed and one comes, as a stranger, to what it has so far produced. But this moment's reflection has left him with eyes half-raised and set upon the near sideboard, noting its high polish, and in his mind a teasing statement stands like a placard : at intervals, perhaps every week, this room will be " turned out ".

Returned to the faulty passage, he finds he has lost the phrase that a moment ago had leaped to the rescue. Fiercely he rounds upon the central enemy, his breakfast-time emotion, unappeased and still manœuvring. Mere languor, the normal occasional drop below form, allowing the critical to usurp the place of the creative faculty, he might profitably have used. But this emotional derailment is pure loss.

A fresh snowfall, shortening his walk, brings him home before tea-time. The house seems alien. Its facade stares

at him as if inquiring his business. For the first time he notices its weather-stains, the marks of its private experience. The door, sun-blistered, challenges his approach, seeming to warn him, as his hand reaches for the latch, that he will enter at his peril. Shall he turn back, brave the snow-fall until on-coming darkness brings the promise of to-morrow?

The door opens upon immediate fulfilment of apprehension. Loud voices, laughter, echoing along the passage. Dominating the tumult, the voice of Miss Tillard, almost unrecognizable. Careless and gay, transforming the quiet interior.

While he stands listening, transfixed, the door, left open behind him for the shaking out of his snow-sprent coat, shuts with a resounding bang. Silence, abrupt and absolute. The kitchen door opens and Miss Tillard, flushed and dishevelled, comes hurriedly down the passage.

"What an afternoon! I'll make up your fire, and perhaps you'd like an early tea."

His response, from the passage as she slides into his room, a little eager and a pitch or two above his usual tone, sounds to him like a contribution to the recent din. Here he is, caught, entangled in society, playing a part.

When she returns with his tea, they discuss the weather, self-consciously expanding the topic, each waiting for the other to make an end.

Once more alone, Purling feels for a moment pleasantly social, relieved of the burden of his morning. But at a price that grows as he regards it, more and more appalling. His new world has fallen in ruins. For the moment, so long as she is engaged with her friends, the way lies open that leads to the point of departure for the space wherein for illimitable days he has dwelt with his vision. But only for the moment. Once her friends gone, and the two of them

again alone in the house, the truth will settle down, perpetually vocal.

Continuously, henceforth, he will be aware of her: concentrated upon him and his needs, creeping about, muting, on his behalf, the sound of all her doings.

The alternative? To ask her, beg her, to go about her work and her recreation as if he were not there. She would understand. Certainly she is capable of that kind of understanding. Even so, with every sound in the house he would be aware of her, aware, worse still, of her awareness conscious of himself as its object; unable to achieve complete immersion.

Choice, between two kinds of invasion. Wreckage either way.

The surest security is in the lion's mouth? To be in the midst of an oblivious crowd. Part of it, unnoticed. He recalls writers who have worked just anywhere. Dostoevsky, on a corner of the kitchen table, with the family clamorous all about him. Lawrence, tucked into any available space, and at once serenely oblivious. Peace at the heart of a storm. Storm comparable to that raging all the while at Mother Shabey's. Where, after all, he had done some of his best work. The life of the household, wrapped nourishingly about him, had yet left him untouched. *Had never come between him and himself.*

Excuse can easily be improvised. Will Mother Shabey's rooms be available? Where, amongst his still not unpacked belongings, are notepaper and envelopes?

WE'VE ALL GOT TO LEARN

By MONICA STIRLING

WHEN THE 'BUS turned sharply round the corner all but one of the passengers jogged forward as unsurprisingly as farmers mounted on friendly old horses with whose obstinacies they have long been familiar. The remaining passenger, a young girl in A.T.S. uniform, showed herself a stranger to the district by banging her head against the window. Then she began, very quietly, to cry.

Several minutes passed before her behaviour attracted any attention. The 'bus was passing a Georgian house set on a slope at the bottom of which was a swan wreathed lake, and this spectacle moved the passengers to abandon such subjects as Mr. Giles' landgirls and Mrs. Giles' kidneys for the family affairs of the present owners of the house: of how the younger son had been killed at sea and the elder wounded in Africa, of what a sad business the war was and what a shame it would be if the Llarnys couldn't keep the old place in the family. (Planners may come and planners may go, but it seems likely that conservatism will for some time remain a moral if not a political influence in many rural parts of England.)

But as the talk grew desultory an elderly woman seated opposite the child in uniform leaned forward and said amiably, "There, there, my duck. Don't take on so. We've all got our troubles . . ."

"Do you think that helps?" She did not speak loudly, but the authority in her voice made everyone present stare. It in no way harmonized with the distraught expression on her pale face.

"Well—it's something to know we're all in the same boat, isn't it?"

"Is it?" A look that no one present recognized as ironic came into the girl's eyes. She glanced round and,

observing this general failure in awareness, added with deceptive mildness, "Is it? I should think it made it worse. Knowing everyone else was miserable, I mean. Unless one's a born dog in the manger."

"Well . . ." the older woman looked bewildered. She was of an exceptionally kind temperament, and used to associating with persons too habituated to her nature, and too deficient in intellectual power, to be perturbed by the fact that, being without command of any language she could express herself verbally only in clichés.

"Well, duck . . . if you look at it like that. . ."

The clergyman seated next to her came to the rescue.

"Are you . . . is there anything I can . . . we can do?"

The girl looked at him consideringly, then said, articulating over precisely as if for the benefit of a foreigner, "Nothing. Thank you very much."

"Not . . . not a bereavement, I trust?"

"Not a bereavement."

"I wonder . . . would you tell me your name, my dear . . . perhaps my wife . . ."

"If you like. Greta—after Garbo you know." She gave a sarcastic little smile. "Not very suitable, not really."

"Er . . . quite . . . er . . . Greta what?"

"Smith. Quite suitable, that part, in fact . . ."

Unable to finish the sentence she jerked her head away. A moment later it could be seen from the muscles of her neck that she was again crying.

The 'bus jolted along, and no one made any further attempt to communicate with Greta. But her stillness was as difficult to ignore as the deliberate repose of a talented actress, and soon the other passengers began to give each other shifty looks. They were kindly people, but the girl's cool, almost argumentative, manner had antagonized them. Watching her they felt not compassion but guilt, which they mistook for exasperation; and one by one they made

the gestures that were their respective equivalents for a shrug, and began to talk with defensive approval (and in voices louder than was necessary to be heard) of those girls of their acquaintance who were Thoroughly Enjoying Every Moment of life in the services.

Presently the 'bus stopped at the bottom of a lane that led to a big Army camp. Signing to the conductress the girl got jerkily to her feet. She looked even thinner and more desolate standing than she had done seated. But by this time only the conductress, herself a young woman, felt sympathy for her. To show that she did she smiled at Greta and said, as the latter stood waiting on the step: "Cheer up old cock. It'll all be the same in a hundred years. What's the trouble?"

Greta looked at her suspiciously, then gave her a crooked smile and, saying "Homesick", stepped from the 'bus and, without wiping the tears from her face or once looking back, began to walk up the lane.

The 'bus had to wait some minutes for the school children who could be seen running and yelling, at the end of a gravelled track on the opposite side of the road, and as it waited conversation between the passengers became general, as it is apt to do between persons who have shared a dangerous experience, and one or two of them drew deep breaths.

The cause of this uneasiness was walking up the lane, snorting through her sobs at the recollection of the expression on the clergyman's face when he said "Not a bereavement, I trust?" and thinking of her first bereavement. This had occurred when she was eight and had not taken her by surprise. She had early become inured to unpleasantness.

Born in a dirty room in a dirty house in a London slum, Greta had not until she was eight had personal experience of good food or adequate rest. Or of privacy. Her brothers

and sisters, of whom there were a great many, were not all highly intelligent: Mrs. Smith had received instruction as to birth control at the local clinic, but when she attempted to put her knowledge into practice her husband gave her a black eye and said he'd have no looseness in his home, see. Unfortunately for Mr. Smith's children his austere moral outlook did not prevent him spending most of his money upon drink, the effect of which was not to make him more amiable. When Greta was eight her father knocked her mother down. It was not the first time he had done so, but it was the last because, having caught her head on the iron fender as she fell, Mrs. Smith died soon afterwards.

After this the authorities decided with regret that not even considerations as to the sanctity of the home justified Mr. Smith's being allowed to remain in charge of his family and, he having been consigned to a prison with which he was not unfamiliar, the children were allotted to Approved Homes.

But before Greta could be dispatched to her Home, she was adopted by a social worker who had met the Smiths while nursing in the district.

Polly Leggat was everything Mrs. Smith had not been: maternal, reliable, gay, and pretty. So pretty that during her first days in the clean little house that was to be her home, Greta did little but stare at the small pointed face, the soft curling dark hair, the luminous blue eyes of her adopted mother.

Although Polly Leggat was married, neither she nor the little girl saw much of Mr. Leggat. He was usually away On Business. Greta was glad of this. She could not but conclude, from her own experience, that a household without men was happier, as well as more orderly, than one with them. Also Polly had one thing in common with Mrs. Smith—a tendency to cry after her husband's visits, and to ascribe her tears to her being Out Of Sorts. Had

Greta been a more gently nurtured little girl she would have wondered why people ever married. As it was, she thought she knew. Just sex: another of nature's dirty tricks.

But though her new life did not enlarge her conception of matrimony, it did give her a new and entirely delightful idea as to the relations possible between mother and child and, with Polly's love as guide, Greta began to change from a sharp little animal into a considerate child.

Then, when she was fourteen and had almost forgotten that she had known any care but Polly's, Greta was given yet another cause for hating men. Always a careless driver, Mr. Leggat knocked a man down, killed him, and was arrested for manslaughter, and let it be known at his trial that he and Polly were not legally married. One detail of his private life leading to another, the Magistrate was told that six years ago the accused had adopted, or permitted The Woman Taylor (this was how they referred to Polly) to adopt a girl child. This piece of information incensed the magistrate, himself the affectionate father of several young daughters, more than anything else in the case and, after further investigation, he announced with genuine piety that he was glad to say that, the parties concerned having given false information about themselves, the adoption had not been in order and there was in consequence nothing to prevent the unfortunate little girl being at once rescued from this travesty of a home. Some of those present thought the magistrate was being conscientious, which he was; others thought him interfering, which he also was. The latter group could not alter the old man's decision, but did suggest that the woman Taylor having shown herself an exemplary mother, and the child Smith being broken-hearted at the projected separation, the pair might be allowed a final meeting before the child was taken to the Approved Home chosen for her.

Greta's infancy had taught her something of the way poverty and desire can cause human beings to behave like the less attractive animals, but nothing of how fear can give virtuous and dignified adults the air of terrified children; and from her last meeting with Polly she never entirely recovered. They clung together, unable to find any banal phrases with which to conceal the apprehension each felt on the other's behalf; and three months after they had parted with many a kiss distasted with the salt of broken tears, Polly had committed suicide and Greta, who was not told this lest it should unsettle her, was become a child whose quietness made her teachers uneasy, since not the most unimaginative of them could connect it with docility.

Within six months Greta was practising very few of the virtues taught her by the gentle Polly; simplicity, affectionate ways, and the wish to behave well were gone; only a precocious understanding of the meaning of the word happiness remained, helping her as did nothing else to add up the score of grudges she was unconsciously keeping against a mysterious They who, in her estimation, controlled the universe. The slum baby whose life had been ruined by a drunken father's oscillations between violence and maudlin tenderness had not resented her lot, the adolescent who had known six years' modest and fruitful happiness did. In consequence she hated her teachers with an unjust bitter hatred that aroused the antagonism of all but the most talented. And to the questions as to her feelings and intentions which they too frequently put to her—much as incompetent cooks open the oven door unnecessarily to see how their dishes are faring—she never gave a truthful answer when a lie would serve.

Having left the home with a good record as to ability and no positive fault imputed to her character, Greta was given a job as a nursemaid. The recollection of what Polly had been to her, and a genuine sympathy with all helpless

creatures, made her perform her tasks with an excellence which won the devotion of her charges and the esteem of their parents. In consequence she began, as the months went by, to experience contentment and, having learned cowardice at the Approved Home, became inordinately anxious lest this contentment develop into a happiness whose loss would leave her worse off than before.

It was not long before this fear, like most of those she had entertained, was shown to have been justified. For the war picked her up by the scruff of her neck and flung her into a pit of loneliness such as only Polly's support could have taught her to accept with dignity if not ardour.

In consequence she often aroused the curiosity of strangers by the tears she shed in public. And since neither her delicate bones nor her good articulation suggested the Common Man, most of the strangers who witnessed her disarray were apt to murmur, as the 'bus passengers did while watching her trudge up the lane :

"Homesick? . . . wants to get back to her mum? Mm . . . one of these kids who've never had to budge before . . . oh well . . . one of these days she'll have something to worry about . . . we've all got to learn."

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE SOCIOLOGY OF LITERARY TASTE. L. L. SCHUECKING. The International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. Editor, KARL MANNHEIM. Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.

ONE SCARCELY EXPECTS a laugh from a book on this subject. However, gratitude must out, and to be offered, at this moment of the world's history, a book on literary taste which quotes Shelley *retranslated from the German* seems to me the high-water mark of humour. It is presumably unconscious, and Dr. Schuecking is not to be taken lightly. His is the familiar style of Teutonic doctrinaire tradition: "if the style of a period is described without reservation as the embodiment of the Time Spirit (*Zeitgeist*), it must be permissible to feel some doubt as to what exactly this spirit of the age is." In other words, as others have found—why bother? But "it is a striking fact that it is always so much easier to reduce the Time Spirit of past periods to a formula than to do so for a contemporary world".

At this point it is necessary to inquire into the nature of the author's "contemporary world". His book was originally published in Germany in 1931. There are signs of revision—thus, the phrase "inter-war years" occurs on p. 73. Elsewhere, we read (p. 33) of "to-day in Germany," which in 1944 is hardly to be taken literally, and suggests that the book has been slovenlily translated. I only wonder it has been translated at all, paper-rationing being what it is. There is interest, no doubt, in seeing what Dr. Schuecking was propounding to German audiences on the subject of taste in 1931. The influence of "the family as a cosy intellectual unit" was dwindling, but "in Germany the public library attempts to retain something of the family-spirit" (p. 72), no doubt with something of that "where required, clear-sighted organization of the laity" (p. 76) which is to restore æsthetic conviction.

In the main, he has (naturally) a down on aristocracy, and equally an up on the middle-classes. The aristocrat's "ideal of life is intellectualized" and "property implies a permanent temptation to the enjoyment of life" (these are faults); "his characteristic style of living makes him anti-individualistic" and we hear of "the aristocratic and therefore unoccupied woman". On the other hand, "Art had played in the life of the aristocracy the part of a decorative element; in the life of the independent-minded (*sic*!) middle-class, it had the more exalted task of serving as herald and prophet of the highest and profoundest thought of mankind". That of Ruskin, for instance? And no doubt the decline of British drama with the advent of the middle-classes does not matter. The answer is, of course, that there was a connection between the rise of the middle-classes and the ascent to the throne of Hanoverians, but Dr. Schuecking does not see this answer.

Mainly concerned with German thought and writing, from time to time he favours his readers, originally German, with views on English literature which are now offered to us. Chaucer (p. 10) "ate the bread of a court at which French taste and the rather stale theories of love of past centuries were still accepted; and a good part of his literary activity ran on these lines. They still left room for the play of his sense and elegance, his taste and wit and irony" (which is a good deal, be it observed) "but not for the real element in his popularity, his wonderful sense of the Thing as It Is". We are told that "Elizabethan poetry lives in a world of ideas that no longer has anything in common with our own"—and if by that is meant the Germany of 1931, or perhaps of any era, that is true; but it needs no International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction to tell us that. What is not true is that Elizabethan poets (p. 11) "largely obtained their sustenance in their patrons' castles, where they then, at occasional

meals, 'sat below the salt,' that is to say among the servants"—such poets as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Philip Sidney, for instance, on the one hand, or Greene, Nashe, Breton, grubbing in London, on the other? "In the theatre," however, "the works that won applause were precisely those which through their closeness to life and their realistic psychology were bound to be foreign to the taste of the aristocratic world".

For such downright howlers, due to ignorant inflexibility of thought and expression, I can see no excuse: and if there is paper to spare for their dissemination, at a time when so many valuable works are out of print, then I think it is time the Japanese too had a look in. Not only would their views on the *hari-kari* motif in *Hamlet* be at least as engaging as Dr. Schuecking saying, however ironically, "for young unmarried persons literature has always had a special significance . . . It frequently occurred" (in the nineteenth century) "that a book provided the first incentive or gave material assistance in the formation of a lifelong union." Japanese with samurai-knowledge might have something to say about his reference to a "cavalier" of the eighteenth century.

ROBERT HERRING

TRISTAN UND ISOLT. GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG.

German Medieval Series. Edited by AUGUST CLOSS.
Blackwell, Oxford. 8s. 6d.

HOW MANY PEOPLE in these times read medieval German? It is right that students should have a text of *Tristan und Isolt* available at a reasonable price, but the purpose of this volume is not defined. The introduction is not profound enough for scholars specializing in Arthurian research, for example, there is no reference to the work of Denis de Rougemont and his *Passion and Society*, yet a student needs more explanation than he is given of the meaning and tradition of courtly love as it was understood in the twelfth century. One suspects again that much study of early

literature is used simply as a crossword puzzle of grammatical forms.

The volume would be excellent as a prompt book for those who have a university tutor at their elbow but it needs more notes for the reader who has a slight knowledge of the subject but is not a specialist.

BRYHER

THROUGH JAPANESE BARBED WIRE. GWEN

PRIESTWOOD. Harrap. 8s. 6d.

THIS IS A good escape story, full of atmosphere and of the life of a doomed city before and after surrender though it is astounding that so few in Hongkong seem to be aware of danger before the fighting began. The author is a little hard, perhaps, in her judgment of people not as resourceful as herself but she behaved with the utmost courage and foresight from the start of the battle. Her escape from the internment camp to China with one other fellow-prisoner was an amazing achievement. The volume is full of small, colourful details that build up an unfamiliar landscape for the reader, the chapters of the actual getting away from Hongkong itself being particularly vivid.

MORID SPALDING

MEMORIES OF HAPPY DAYS. JULIAN GREEN.

Dent. 10s. 6d.

MR. GREEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY is the right book for this moment. As many of our readers know, he was born in Paris and lived there until he left in 1919, after service in the last war, to study at the University of Virginia, but his parents were American. He was one of the best known among the younger French novelists, and the author as well of an enchanting *Journal*, two volumes of which had appeared before 1939. This book is the first one that he has written in English.

All cities have, once in a century, a particular moment of richness and beauty, and for Paris this was less during the turbulent twenties than in that leisurely stretch from the

WANTED—

£1,500,000!

Day by day, night by night, the men of the R.A.F., without thought of self, are making their ever mightier contribution to victory. What of our contribution to the gallant hearts who fall by the way—to them—to their dependants? Help us to raise that extra £1,500,000 to reach the £6,000,000 we need.

ROYAL AIR FORCE BENEVOLENT FUND

Please send Donations to — LORD RIVERDALE, Chairman, or BERTRAM T. RUMBLE, Hon. Sec., Appeals Committee, R.A.F. BENEVOLENT FUND, 1 SLOANE STREET, LONDON, S W 1.
Cheques and P.O. payable to R.A.F. Benevolent Fund.

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

Exhibition in 1900 to 1914. Mr. Green describes this atmosphere with much love and clarity, though he is not blind to some of its faults, particularly that of an educational system where children were forced to work longer hours than factory workers and almost never got out of doors. His chapter on a Paris winter in 1917 reflects to-day in an astonishing manner for as he says so truly, war is chiefly monotony, cold, and boredom.

It was a shock to be transplanted from his war experiences to the unknown "new world". The author is obviously not so happy with it as he is with his memories of France. There are some most interesting passages on his method of work and on his first books, a delightful account of his first meeting with André Gide and of various other writers and painters.

Mr. Green returned to the States in 1940. Our quarrel is with the shortness of the volume or rather, that he should have tried to crowd into it the events of thirty years.

We should welcome more details about his childhood and the last three chapters could well have been enlarged to form a book by themselves.

BRYHER

THE BARBER'S TRADE UNION AND OTHER STORIES. MULK RAJ ANAND. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.

DR. ANAND is not a newcomer to English letters, though his short stories may be less widely known than *The Sword and the Sickle* and some of his other novels. The present volume is a collection of nineteen short stories, all of which had previously appeared separately in various magazines.

The stories he has to tell may be fantastic, like the one of *The Maharaja and the Tortoise*, or tragic, like *The Cobbler and the Machine*, but Mr. Anand has the gift of making them plausible even to those who know nothing about India. Despite the Indian themes, atmosphere and local colour, he is perhaps the most western writer of the East. For there is a touch of irony and sarcasm about his

LANDSCAPE VERSEChosen by **JOHN BETJEMAN** and **GEOFFREY TAYLOR**

The first in a new and unusual series of anthologies entitled "New Excursions into English Poetry".

With 16 original Lithographs by John Piper

10/6 net

THE FACE WITHOUT A FROWN

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire

IRIS LEVESON GOWER"This charming book is vividly written."—Sir John Squire in the *Illustrated London News*."A delightful book."—Hugh Kingsmill in *Punch*.*Illustrated*

15/- net

CHINA, MY CHINA**HAROLD B. RATTENBURY** (Author of "Understanding China")"This mellow and understanding book."—*Manchester Guardian*."This pleasant book."—*Times Literary Supplement*.*Illustrated*

15/- net

FREDERICK MULLER LTD.**BOOKS AND THE COMMUNITY**

Books are helping to fight the War and prepare for the peace.

What should be the place of books, and the book trade, in the post-war world? It is worth thinking about.

JOHN & EDWARD BUMPUS, LTD.*Booksellers to His Majesty The King***477 OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1***Mayfair 3601*

writing which seems to belong to London and Paris as much as to India. *A Pair of Mustachios*, which ridicules certain aspects of the Caste system, is a perfect example of almost Parisian persiflage. Maupassant could have written the story had he been an Indian instead of a Frenchman. What distinguishes Anand from Maupassant, however, is that his stories cannot be taken at their face value only. For he is not a mere story teller, he is a poet as well. There runs a fine poetic streak through his work, and the poesy is by no means confined to the three prose poems included in the book. Some of his metaphors and simile, both original and brilliant, will be savoured by the more fastidious readers.

ALFRED PERLÈS

PUBLICATIONS

IT IS PLEASANT to welcome back both *Wales* (edited by Keidrych Rhys, 2s. 6d.) and *The Welsh Review* (edited by Gwyn Jones, 2s. 6d.). Each, in the June issue, pays generous tribute to the late Alun Lewis—*Wales* in verse from Vernon Watkins, Brenda Chamberlain, and John Ormond Thomas, with a short prose appreciation by George Ewart Evans; *The Welsh Review* with an appreciation by the Editor and a story and section of poems from India by the dead writer. Gwyn Jones also includes Jack Jones ("A Gallery of Grand Chaps"), W. C. Devereux ("Wales and Industry"), a good story by the late Geraint Goodwin, and a translation of the fifth Duino Elegy, with commentary, by B. J. Morse.

On the whole, *Wales*, which has grown thicker, seems less experimental than before. This may be partly through the absence of many young men overseas. The editor is able to indulge his hobby with another batch of Poems from the Forces, but most space is given to articles; Welsh National Wildlife, Early Iron Age Discovery (Sir Cyril Fox), Wales and America (John Cowper Powys), Towards

BY THE AUTHOR OF
SPIRITUAL PLURALISM AND RECENT PHILOSOPHY

Happiness, Freedom, and God

C. A. RICHARDSON

An essay on ethics, theism, and moral responsibility, based on the ideas of happiness and wisdom rather than on those of goodness and virtue. (7/6 net)

A HARRAP BOOK

Scottish Art and Letters

No. 1

Editor :
R. Crombie Saunders

Art Editor :
J. D. Fergusson

ARTICLES

SHORT STORIES

POETRY

Contributors

J. F. Hendry on *The Element of Myth in James Joyce*
Robert Melville on *Rousseau and Chirico*.

also

A. S. Neill
Kaikhosru Sorabji
James Bridie
J. D. Fergusson
Fred Urquhart
Morley Jamieson

Adam Drinan
Norman McCaig
W. S. Graham
G. S. Fraser
William Soutar

REPRODUCTIONS

by Chirico, Rousseau, also Donald Bain, Marie de Banzie, Isabel Babianska.

Cover by J. D. Fergusson

5/- (cloth 7/6)

WILLIAM MACLELLAN, 240 Hope Street, Glasgow, C. 2

a Welsh Theatre (Lord Howard de Walden), Was St. David Ever Canonized? (Rev. Silas M. Harris), and Robert Graves (still tiresomely truculent) on bardic mythology.

A newcomer, *Scottish Art and Letters* (editors, R. Crombie Saunders and J. D. Fergusson, 5s.) is less rigidly "nationalist" than its Welsh contemporaries and so may reach a public which justifies its higher price. In addition to articles on Scottish education, music and theatre, there are also Robert Melville writing with distinction on Rousseau and Chirico, and J. F. Hendry on myth in Joyce; a characteristic story by Fred Urquhart, and poems by, among others, Adam Drinan, the late William Soutar and Maurice Lindsay (who contributes a beautiful *Earl Magnus before Haakon on Egilsay*, based on an incident in the Orkneyinga Saga). For future issues there are announced Edith Sitwell on "Some Scottish Poetry", Dr. Henry Farmer on "Scottish Instrumental Music in the Eighteenth Century", poetry by Hugh MacDiarmid, and reproductions of work by East Coast painters. This quarterly is well got up, though I find the cover unattractive.

In apparent opposition to these, *The New Saxon Pamphlets* (edited by John Atkin) have "shaken off the English literary inferiority complex", which we thus learn existed. The first issue "won't subscribe to the view that to write good poetry you must be a Celt", but at the same time announces that "most of the contributions are stories. This is because the English story is more vital and interesting to-day than the English poem." So where are we? Lost among labels! Some people are so busy tying them on, they forget to pack their luggage. The best story here is by Reginald Moore.

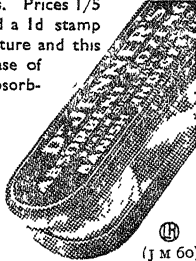
Much the same careless expression of muddled thought is shown by the sponsors of *Rhyme and Reason* (edited by John Martin, 1s.). A covering letter regrets that "there are serious omissions in the collection—due to the dispersal



**BRIGHTER
DAYS
FOLLOW
DEFEAT OF
INDIGESTION**

Gloom goes with indigestion. sunny smiles return with the comforting relief brought by "Dr Jenner's Absorbent Lozenges." Discovered by Dr Jenner 150 years ago Prescribed by five generations of Physicians. Prices 1/5 and 3/4, or send a 1d stamp for helpful Literature and this handy Pocket Case of "Dr Jenner's Absorbent Lozenges"

**SAVORY &
MOORE LTD.**
Dept., A.L.
143 New Bond
Street,
London, W. 1



**DENTURE
COMFORT with
CONFIDENCE**

Do you suffer pain and embarrassment by wearing a denture which has become loose through gum-shrinkage? Dentists recommend KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE to make false teeth fit firmly — to restore confidence and to enable you to masticate food properly. A tasteless powder, harmless to denture and user, it will hold your dental plate in correct position, thus obviating painful and embarrassing situations. From all chemists — 1/3 & 3/3.

**KOLYNOS DENTURE
FIXATIVE**

Also, use KOLYNOS DENTURE
POWDER for cleaning false teeth, 1/3



SIGHT AND SOUND

6d.

A Film Quarterly

DEVOTED TO THE CULTURAL ASPECTS
OF THE CINEMA

March : July : October : December

Published by **THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE**
4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1

of poets on the World's Fighting fronts. We felt, however, that it was important to publish what was available now rather than wait indefinitely while we made this collection more representative". A certain amount of waiting was done, however, for the letter, originally dated 22nd December, 1943, is over stamped 23rd March, 1944. The "representation" includes Adam Drinan, John Manifold, Francis Scarfe, Jack Lindsay, John Pudney, and is intended to show that "the lyricism, the romantic passion for which the poets of these islands were loved has been re-born and blended with a revolutionary imagination and an inspired realism which is the counterpart in literature of the physical creation of the new, socialist, unshackled society". So now we know ! But I don't believe it. A further guide to the audience for whom this word-rattling is meant may be found in the statement that Yeats's "Easter, 1916" is included because it is hoped "that through this new kind of booklet many shall come to know this poem who otherwise would never have had the opportunity of gaining increase from it". To which anyone who feels moved to put out a pamphlet called *Tut*, has my blessing. *Dint* seems a misprint for *Don't*, and a collective name for a good many other brochures which have come my way could be *Stuff and Nonsense*; or perhaps just Nonsense, having no stuffing.

Less pretentious than these and pleasing in its own right is *Here To-day* (edited by Pierre Edmunds and Roland Mathias, 1s. 3d.). This is not an addition to the "little magazines", but is "an attempt to apply certain features of their technique to the circumstances of a provincial town". The town is Reading, and a useful article is on the Reading Repertory Company (it will be noticed that interest in theatre is a feature of most of these publications). Roland Mathias contributes further to interest with a study of Mary Russell Mitford.

R. H.

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

SEPTEMBER

EDITORIAL

1944

THE LONG PATIENCE of our preparation uncoils in swift vigour of attack. Restrictions relax—I write in a black-out which will be reduced by the time this is in print. But just as I did my best to maintain certain peace-time standards in dark days, I shall preserve discipline still and see no reason yet to indulge in careless talk. With deliberation, I have restricted myself to one page, the less room to have to make unguarded remarks. It is impossible to follow advances on so many fronts without becoming breathless; even war correspondents confess to the difficulty of keeping up with the rate of progress and for those not on the spot, in any sense, as news-purveyors, it is best to be silent till separate facts focus into a fuller perspective.

Peace is purchased at too wrenching a price, for us to be careless in its appraisal. Therefore, I wait till next month to conduct what may be termed a post-wartem into recent conditions. But if I do not comment now on five years of war, I will be scant too on a lesser anniversary—nine years of editorship, saying only that anniversaries, at any time, are an occasion for greeting. As I thank all those who have supported us, I greet also all those lately or soon to be liberated—not least, though possibly last, the people of this island and particularly of London; not only from bombs, but from all the forms of invasion we so freely, if at times involuntarily, endured that others as well as ourselves might be free. Wherefore, if we were a Fortress, let us, in flying metaphor, salute in turn our own Liberators who will soon be returning. And salute not uselessly with the roses of hysteria, but with the wine of purpose, from conduits scoured cleanly of blood.

TRICERATOPS AND PEPPER

By BRYHER

WE ARE ON the threshold of a new historical phase yet still too isolated to foresee what the post-war world will be like. (One guess, as good as yours, remarkably like the old !) We can only consider the future through our past experience and here, at least, mine has been comprehensive and not confined to a single country.

I have known France well since I was five, seen the struggling, turbulent Germany of the late nineteen-twenties, and made many visits to the United States ; I was in Prague that fateful Munich summer and watched the war from a neutral outpost until September, 1940. I predicted this struggle (in print) in 1932, began my refugee work in 1933, and warned all who would listen to me, but they were few, of what was about to happen. In those ten years, from 1930 to 1940, I feel I made but two mistakes ; I thought the Czechs would put up at least a token resistance, and I dated the outbreak of war rather to the spring of 1940 than autumn 1939. Otherwise history developed as I had miserably foreseen it would, including the collapse of France, my only consolation being a certain detachment. I am still of the same opinion to-day that I was in 1932 ; this is an unnecessary war because a thousand British policemen could have stopped the Nazi movement before it became dangerous ; all political parties are, I feel, equally to blame because they substituted Peace or War for Right and Wrong and these words are not similar in meaning.

Progress is slow, barbarity so near, freedom so easily lost. Presumably after a life of perhaps twenty thousand years since Cro-Magnin days, the individual is just able to accept the fact that water is wet and wood is hard, for he seldom accepts the evidence of his senses in everyday

life. Public opinion is preconceived opinion; nations repeat formulas that were true once in a different set of circumstances but are as dangerous to-day as they were once of value.

Slavery horrifies us and we have recently insisted upon its being abolished in Abyssinia yet we tolerated the enslavement of a large portion of Germany's population in pre-war days without a murmur. We always had the excellent excuse that we must not interfere with her internal affairs. This would never have satisfied our Puritan grandfathers, they had a sense of right and wrong and they would have known that once the local supply of Jews and liberals was liquidated the Nazis would look round for other victims. Any living religion has always possessed a profound sense of good and evil. To condone a concentration camp upon any grounds—even those of avoiding war—is to side with darkness. Humanity catches only occasionally a glimpse of what it might become in an age of freedom, but these glimpses are our chances of survival and unless we are to fall lower than the beasts of the jungle justice is more important than peace and the shutting of eyes to persecution.

Nations, like individuals, are active or passive in their approach to life and reflect this in their government. If active, citizens are full of energy and impatient of red tape, but both France and England ended the last struggle short of men who would "get things done" for at least a generation. In both countries foreign policy was directed by men either too old or too unfit to have shared in the war. Inevitably because they were unable to compete upon equal terms with a "tough" world, through sheer instinct of self-preservation, they put the emphasis upon security and appeasement because their heaven was a department that required routine, rather than decisive action, with a pension at sixty. We are still governed by

these principles to-day (I speak less of Parliament than of the permanent officials who really plan and carry out the laws) because the young and the vigorous, whatever their age, are actively engaged in the war. Whether England re-emerges as a great Power or sinks to a graceful decadence, rich in glory, depends upon how far and how soon she is able to shake off bureaucratic control during the post-war period.

It is doubtful if we can recapture our export trade. It took us a century to build it and we destroyed it in an hour. The initiative of our grandfathers built up the vast foreign reserves that have saved us in two wars. These reserves were seized in a moment of panic clumsily and ruthlessly, yet it is England rather than private enterprise that has suffered. Merchants are not going to use their brains to reconstruct something less secure than the wildest gamble. Nor is it possible for a State itself to enter such a market—the world knows it to be too dependent upon political events such as elections. We have warned our youth that if it wants to trade abroad it must settle abroad. There will be every inducement to do this in the form of lower taxation and greater freedom, but it will be a different system and we shall have no reserves with which to meet another crisis in future generations.

I know Germany well. I had many German friends, but I never crossed the frontier nor knowingly bought an article made there after 1933. I do not think that all Germans are monsters, but I do feel that people who elected the Nazis should pay for their folly, as we in England paid for our apathy with the blitzes. If I were asked what was the chief reason for the triumph of the Nazi party over democratic Germany I should say that it was over-education. It is important that we understand this because there is a risk that post-war England may make the same mistake. In order to relieve the labour market, free or practically

free education was given to the Germans up to at least high school and often university level. A boy could not mend a cycle without a university degree nor a girl sow a packet of seeds without a diploma. On paper they were the best educated people in Europe, and what was the result? Frustration and immediate adherence to a "burn the books" movement.

If education is to be the opening of doors so that people may have interesting lives and enjoy their leisure, the more we have of it the better, but it has never yet been more than an old conception of an unpleasant discipline, designed to keep the human mind in thrall to Church or State. Centuries ago when books were rare and innovations dangerous, to memorize helped survival. To-day, for all our reference libraries, we base most of our tests upon what pupils can learn by heart. Gifted people sometimes survive such training, and a minority delights in it, but most children, because they find it intolerable, cease to think and respond later in life to all forms of violent agitation. We need fewer schools and shorter lessons, for we work our children hours that would never be tolerated in a factory for workers of the same age; in place of them we want gardens, libraries, and workshops where children can learn through their own activity. One of the sad things about this war was the way youth welcomed it, "at last we can be with the machines we love," they said over and over again to me, "instead of rotting away in classrooms."

In talk of post-war reform people here forget that the one school for everybody has been tried by many countries and that the drift is away from it, both in Russia and the United States. Ninety per cent of the Swiss go to the same school, but it does not make for democracy, rather the reverse. The father's rank, particularly if he is an official, counts far more than it would with us here. Teach-

ing methods are stagnant because there is no competition and if a teacher dislikes a child, and this sometimes happens, there is no transference possible to another school. Remember, too, one school—one mind. If we want equality of development we need thirty or forty different types of instructors and places. Unless we are flexible we shall lose our chances to the Russians and Americans who are, and this will mean a lower standard of education and living for us all.

We should not forget the same principles with medicine. The Swiss get full medical attention from the doctor of their choice and more up to date treatment than we do, by having to pay insurance at reasonable rates, but usually with private companies. It is unnecessary to make doctors into civil servants to provide a medical service for all. A great deal of ill-health is psychological in origin, but only a few people with special gifts are equipped to deal with that intricate mechanism—the human mind. We are still half a century away from applying the knowledge that we already possess. As it is we put a premium upon ill health. It is often the only break in the intolerable monotony of war-time or working life. We may be sick, but we must not be honest and take holidays. Again, much disease may be traced back to the infections of childhood. When I paid my income tax before the war I used to enclose a letter with the cheque saying that I hoped that they would use the money to immunize children against diphtheria. It is a painful death and we lost more babies from it annually than we did from bombs. It was only when there was a risk of a widespread adult epidemic with a shortage of nurses and beds that we began our immunization scheme—yet most American states had been doing it already for years with spectacular success. We have the means to prevent in the same manner nearly all cases of scarlet fever and whooping cough. Why don't we do it? People

are lamentably ignorant about the process and tend to associate immunization with poison, doctors are too often indifferent. With regard to new methods of treating rheumatism, the disturbances of age and later life diseases, they upset routine, and that is never popular in any hospital, school, or institution. Our steps to control disease should be less towards more red tape than in the provision of proper housing, water, immunization, and a medical training that is based upon modern discoveries.

There is one thing that the post-war world should remember. Civilization depended in 1940 entirely upon England's decision. We could have had an easy peace, and the world would have slid back into slavery. We chose to fight. It was a spontaneous reaction of the entire population because no government could have stopped the masses had they decided to panic when the raids began. The English stood up to the bombs and the gunfire, and no one who was not in the island can realize what it was like, not because of a political belief or any special religious faith, but because they had inherited a tradition of freedom and they realized, almost too late, that this freedom was in danger. This is a civilian's war. It has often been said but it is time it is believed as well. We should stop regarding battle as a sort of glorified tournament carried on by a few professionals. The burden of this struggle has fallen upon the women, the children, the old people, and the defence workers who have had to fight fires, go to work, do a thousand extra jobs, and keep the machinery of existence going without reward, on meagre civilian rations whilst all their savings have been absorbed by current taxation. Without the courage of the people in the blitzed cities there would have been no North Africa, no Sicily, and no D Day. They are entitled to first place after the war in any scheme of material reward and help.

I do not subscribe to the opinion that these five years

of horror and unhappiness have been salutary to the soul. It is an evil doctrine that bases spiritual reward upon family grief and compulsory denial. For myself, during this long period of misery and frustration, I have found consolation in two stories. One is that millions of years ago there lived a dinosaur, the Triceratops, who over-specialized his head to such an extent that he became unable to lift it from the ground, so the species became extinct. Whenever I come up against bureaucracy and "life through forms" I think of that poor saurian with his great head in the sand. The other tale comes back to me when I listen to political discussions. In the early days of our era it cost vast sums to import pepper from the East. Yet it was a necessary ingredient at a time when we had no knowledge of modern methods of storing food. So the use of pepper became a deadly sin. Sermons were preached against it, it was the sign of irreligiousness and worldliness, it divided families and dictated policies. How many of us know to-day that it was once a symbol and a banner? We shall go on fighting over transient things until we learn at last to turn our attention to origins, to the nursery, and the schoolroom. Children need freedom to grow just as they need to eat, they need freedom from undue interference. We can twist them into any pattern, but the frustrations of babyhood will be worked out in far more dangerous forms in adult life. We have knowledge but we will not use it. In the immense courage of this time nobody has yet been brave enough to suggest a charter of freedom for the child.

SONG FOR A HERO

THERE IS NO home for the hero.
Even when a boy he left his passions
At the pier. His eyes did not note them,
Nor the white handkerchiefs, but turned,
As the North-controlled needle turns,
To the gulls who offered no memento.

Yet with the rest he had his curios,
The master key that opened all,
The starfish sporting one more limb,
The match-box with the double back,
Shells highly convoluted like a screw,
But these made exits from his heart.

And school was taken in his stride,
His gaze averted from it all,
Though capes and bays and distances
Were glanced at, recognized
As matters of potential interest.
Astronomy he was not taught.

Darkness ingathers the ship. The foam
Of many seas arches upon her bows.
The cargoes, corn for metal,
Make their change. And he takes stock,
Sees to delivery, hears the engine run,
And stands observant at the winch.

There is no home for the hero.
His head—like a head in profile,
The minted head on a coin—
Occupies the windy spaces,
And holds predestined courses.

GEORGE BRUCE

PERSONAL NOTES ON FRANZ KAFKA

By JOHN URZIDIL

EVERY ENGLISHMAN WOULD have been greatly attracted by Franz Kafka's personality. He detested noise and, although far from being phlegmatic, he never got excited. He was fond of understatements. Asked about his occupation, he never answered: "I am a writer," but always: "I work for an Insurance Company." His superiors thought well of his reports. They did not notice, of course, that those reports were ennobled by a unique prose style. Kafka merely intended to perform his duties satisfactorily. Occasionally, however, he compared the insurance business to the religion of primitive tribes who believe in the prevention of evil by means of various manipulations.

When, in 1912, his first book, *Betrachtung*, was published, he presented a copy to my wife with the significant dedication: "The advice, 'No flies will get into a closed mouth' (concluding words of *Carmen* by Merimée) has not yet been followed in this book. Therefore it is full of flies—best keep it always shut." Such was Kafka's statement on a work which marked a new phase in European prose. I remember an afternoon when Kafka talked to me about Flaubert, and, as the strongest symptom of literary conscience, quoted Flaubert's remark about one of his novels just in the making: "This is not the way great works of art originate." In addition he mentioned Ibsen's *Pretenders to the Crown* where the poet is asked: "Are you always so sure that you really are a scald?" And, at the same time, there occurred to him some words from Goethe's *Dairy*: "A few poems offered me the opportunity of trying whether there still remained something poetical in me." Goethe wrote these sceptical lines in 1812, long before many of his outstanding poetical works were even begun.

It had been Goethe, whom Kafka admired so much, who coined the formula: "May no one think himself capable of overcoming the first impressions of his childhood." This recognition was to become the foundation of a whole psychological school. Kafka's personality and work certainly testify to the correctness of this proposition. The rugged atmosphere in his paternal home, the threatening and depressing appearance of his bourgeois-father were the heaviest mental burden to Kafka throughout his whole life. His mind and work were deeply influenced by this unavoidable father-vision. He was unable to set himself free of it, even though he wrote a hundred-page letter to his father, a document of utter frankness, an indictment of the tyrannical father-god, an attempt at analysis, both militant and humble, of the fundamental conflicts between the two worlds of father and son.

Kafka is usually considered as one of the outstanding and most peculiar German stylists. His style, however, was formed not only in the sphere of the German language, not only by the creative elements of Jewish ideology, but also by the Czech atmosphere in which he lived. He was born at Prague, in 1883, where he spent his childhood and youth, where he studied and worked, and where lived his best friends. Thus his style, from the beginning, was amalgamated with Slavonic elements. In my opinion, there is no doubt that Kafka's uncommon way of representation, his abundance of extraordinary metaphors, his allegorical and symbolical features owe much to the Czech forms of expression and to their particular realistic lyricism.

He looked at himself in a meditative, inquisitive, accusatory and judicial way, and you may safely say that all his writings are nothing but the records of these procedures which he uninterruptedly instituted against himself. In those procedures, the whole world was at once the prose-

cutor, the juror, the witness, the advocate, and the chorus-like public, and, in Kafka's person, the whole world in all its concerns, connections, developments, in all its multiplicity was brought to trial: the *actual world*, not the past; for Kafka was wholly unhistorical. His work consists of indictments, pleas, protocols, corpora delicti, pertaining not only to Man but to God too.

To Kafka Judaism was only the personification of his religiousness in general. His simple phrase, "Writing as a kind of Prayer," may be considered as the key to his works. The quality of his religiousness is shown by the following sentences: "Man cannot live without an abiding faith in something indestructible in him. Both, the indestructible and the faith, may remain concealed from him. The means whereby this concealment finds its expression is the belief in a personal God." The power of this God manifests itself mostly in the unpretentious and the small, in the unnoted and the despised. Everywhere and suddenly man may be summoned before God's tribunal. In Kafka's continual discussions between the self-accusing defendant and the divine, for instance in *The Trial*, there certainly is a kind of modern Job-like attitude. He does not cease to quarrel with God who, at the same time, appears to be ultimately vindicated by this quarrelling. This is the substance of almost all Kafka's works. It is most obvious in *The Castle* where the introspection of the hero is most profound while he vainly struggles to attain admittance to the Castle and has to follow an endless, complicated road abounding in bizarre sinuosities and in innumerable internal and external impediments.

True, the Jew as a stranger, and the loneliness of a Jew, are expressed not only by the hero of *The Castle*, but also in Kafka's various animal stories, as, for instance, in the *Mole*, in *Josefine or the Race of Mice*, in *Jackals and Arabs*, or even in the *Transformation*; but the example of the Jew,

being the most obvious and perfect case, suggested itself to the author as a symbol of the general strangeness and loneliness of man. He presents us with the innumerable means, cautious experiments, deliberate undertakings man has to invent and the fabulous habitations, underground canals and labyrinthine zigzags, to overcome the Babel-like confusion, the incommensurability of phenomena, the skew contrapositions of life, the lack of mutual understanding. He shows us how man struggles for regions which lie beyond his life and which cannot be reached by his soul. These, however, are religious problems in general and cannot with reason be confined behind the walls of a solely Jewish attitude, notwithstanding the fact that it is this attitude which gave Kafka's standard of judgment and the principal material for his most impressive symbols together with certain formidable talmudic weapons of his style. In this respect he reminds us of Spinoza who also drew from Jewish sources both deliberately and unconsciously and who likewise achieved a far-reaching general effect.

There are religious roots to Kafka's transcendental and tragic irony, too, to his sense of humour which explores the peculiar and the grotesque. This irony and this humour result from his deep sympathy with the creature which always and in every individual case offers some peculiarity and which, consequently, always falls to the mercy of a problematic fate. Kafka's sense of humour, therefore, is but the demoniacal glittering of his melancholy. Somebody performs something which apparently is quite commonplace. Under the X-rays of the discerning, however, it is bizarre because that person had been unconscious of the real symbolical significance of his action. It is just this esteem for the importance of the scope of haphazard fortuity where Kafka's religiousness manifests itself. He always discovers the hidden relationship that is active

between the smallest and the greatest facts and phenomena. Just why are human beings so inevitably bizarre? Because an abyss gapes between the divine and the human worlds; their mutual relations bridge unfathomable empty spaces and can be grasped but by irony. Whatever Kafka describes acquires its own special proportions which render even the commonest things somewhat abstruse or absurd, but, on the other hand, make them also new and interesting. Consequently, he is able to tell the story of an everyday matter as if it were something that had never existed before, and he may confidently dare to be even purely descriptive. I recall an observation on Kafka which I have read somewhere; that his style reminds us of a discoverer's report delivered to an Academy.

Once he said to me: "To be a poet means to be strong in metaphors. The greatest poets were always the most metaphorical ones. They were those who recognized the deep mutual concern, yes even the identity of things between which nobody noticed the slightest connection before. It is the span and the spread of the metaphor which makes the poet." You cannot, of course, be oblivious of the fact that every metaphor, by linking seemingly disparate subjects, is nothing but a religious or philosophical intuition of the unity of the world.

Is it surprising that this metaphysical and complicated mind favoured the instinctive, pure and simple life and considered it a desirable and, so to speak, idyllic goal? The title of one of his projected works read: *The Story of a Simple Man with Regular Habits*. The way, however, which leads to this simple life is like the way to the "Castle". To attain this goal, far away from the cultured and refined strata of society, man has to undergo many initial tumults, has to make thousands of efforts to the most varied sorts. The contemplation of those manifold exertions astonishes and saddens one, but, simultaneously,

it provokes a smile. What, however, in man's multitudinous efforts to attain the pure and genuine life, is the moral turning point on which everything depends? It is the capacity for resolution, the ability to make up one's mind. No man knows beforehand when and how he is to reach this moral decision which pertains solely to him personally. Nobody else can reach it for him. Yet, if he misses his decision he can nevermore make amends. His gate which had been kept open for no one but him will be locked and the Gatekeeper who had waited long in order to admit him disappears ("Before the Law"). However, Kafka does not threaten us with a schoolmaster's rod. He rather addresses his reproofs to himself, punishes himself, smiles at himself, weeps for himself, seeks by his work to atone for himself. It is precisely thus that he serves mankind, too. In the ethical bent of his thought and the wide sweep of his convictions one perceives an optimistic conception: the belief in man's goodness, in the possibility of his redemption, in the moral importance of his participation in his own destiny. Only superficial readers can accuse Kafka of artistic decadence. In fact, I do not know any other author who avoids it so scrupulously to value something at zero.

Kafka, who died in 1924, was not a "poet" in the usual sense. No lyric line ever came from his pen; but throughout his works one is conscious of the imaginative rhythmic power of a poet. Nor is he an author in the sense of the "Grands Ecrivains" who conceive vast closely-knit literary edifices. Even in his extensive novels (*The Trial*, *The Castle*, *America*) just as in his shorter prose works (collected under the titles *Meditation*, *The Country Doctor*, *The Hunger Artist*) as well as in the stories *The Transformation*, *The Judgment*, and *The Penitentiary Colony*, Kafka impresses one as a kind of an aphorist. Yet he unquestionably ranks with the great figures in the narrative

literature of the world. Again, he is no philosopher in the technical sense nor are we able to deduce any system of thought from his life work. Nevertheless, scarcely anywhere in recent literature can one find so much philosophical thought, such comprehension of psychology and ethics. Thus Kafka's prose works form a category of their own. He cannot be ranged and classified within any definite group of authors. Perhaps that is why he is in such high repute.

The look of Kafka's eyes was always a little puzzled, full of the wisdom of children and of melancholy slightly counterpointed by an enigmatic smile. He always seemed to be somewhat embarrassed. He did not belong to the people who have a retort in store at all times. It was impossible to salute him first in the street ; he always forestalled it by one second. His whole person was like his prose ; quiet, gradual, serene, free from adjuncts, difficult to comprehend sometimes, not always easy to manage, a task to his lovers, a problem to his admirers, seemingly simple, but certainly pure and, at the same time, so deep that in consequence of this indescribable purity one could never distinctly recognize how deep, in fact, one was looking.

POEMS FROM HEINE'S "DIE NORDSEE"

Translated by VERNON WATKINS

SECOND CYCLE

I

Sea-Greeting

THALASSA ! THALASSA !
Greeting to you, you eternal sea !
Greeting to you ten thousand times
From the glorying heart,
As once greeted you
Ten thousand Greek hearts,
Misfortune-fighting, homeward-longing,
World-renowned Greek hearts.

The waves rose,
They rose and boiled furious,
The sun poured suddenly down
Rose-coloured sunbeams playing,
The terrified flocks of seagulls
Wheeled away, loud screaming,
The horses stamped, the battle-shields clattered,
And far it rang like a shout of triumph :
" Thalassa ! Thalassa ! "

Greeting to you, you eternal sea !
Like the language of home your water resounds to me,
Like dreams of childhood I see it glitter
On your rising and falling kingdom of waves,
And ancient memory tells me afresh
Of all the dear, magnificent plaything,
Of all the brilliant Christmas gifts,
Of all the red trees of coral,
Goldfish, pearls and bright-coloured seashells
That you guard mysteriously
Down there in the house of pellucid crystal.

O how I have yearned in dry estrangement !
Like a faded flower
In the botanist's old tin box
The heart lay in my breast.
It seems as if Winter-long I sat,
A sick man, in the gloomy sick-room,
And now I leave it abruptly,
And dazzling, radiant, shines towards me
The emerald Spring, the sun-awakened,
And a rustling fills the white-blossoming trees,
And the young flowers look at me
With brilliant, fragrant eyes,
And it's scented, and drones and breathes and laughs,
And in the blue sky the small birds sing—
Thalassa ! Thalassa !

You bold returning heart !
How often, how bitterly often
The barbarian women of the North oppressed you.
From large, victorious eyes
They aimed burning arrows ;
With crookedly sharpened words
They tried to split my breast ;
With pointed, cuneiform letters they hammered down
My poor, deafened brain—

In vain I held out the shield,
The arrows hissed, the blows crashed,
And by the North's barbarian women
I was driven to the sea—
And freely breathing, I greet the sea,
The beautiful, saving sea—
Thalassa ! Thalassa !

2

Storm

HEAVY ABOVE THE sea lies the storm,
And through the black cloud-wall
Darts the crooked lightning-flash,
Quickly illuminating and quickly vanishing
Like a jest from the head of Cronos.
Over the waste, heaving water
Far out into distance roll the thunderclaps,
And up leap the white sea-horses
Which Boreas himself begot
On Erichtheus' beautiful mares,
And fearfully the seabirds flutter
Like dead Shades on the Styx
That Charon denied to his night-moving boat.

Poor, droll little ship,
It is dancing out there the most evil dance.
Aeolus sends it the nimblest companions ;
They wildly play up to the gay morrice wave-ranks
One of them whistles, another trumpets,
The third starts sombrely thumping the bombardon,
And the staggering sailor stands at the helm
And fixes his eyes on the compass,
The trembling soul of the ship,
And lifts his hands to the heavens, beseeching :
" O save me, Castor, mounted hero,
And you, fighter with the fist, Polydeuces ! "

The Gods of Greece

FULL-BLOOMING MOON ! In your light,
Like flowing gold, sparkles the sea ;
Like clearness of day, yet dimly enchanted,

It lies on the level expanse of bay ;
And in the clear blue, starless heaven
Hover the white clouds,
Like colossal figures of gods
In shining marble.

No, no longer, those are no clouds.
Those are they themselves, the gods of Hellas,
Who once so joyfully ruled the world,
But now, driven out and wasted in death,
As huge apparitions wander away
In the midnight heaven.

Marvelling and strangely dazzled, I watch
The airy Pantheon,
The solemnly mute, horribly stirred,
Gigantic shapes.
He there is Oronos, the king of heaven,
Snow-white are the locks of his head,
The renowned, Olympus-shaking locks.
He holds in his hand the extinguished lightning,
In his countenance lurk misfortune and grief,
And yet still ever the ancient pride.
Those were better times, O Zeus,
When you delighted yourself in heaven
With boys and nymphs and hecatombs ;
Yet even the gods rule not for ever,
The young drive out the old,
As you yourself the hoary father
And your Titan-mother drove out,
Jupiter Parricida !
You, too, I recognize, haughty Juno !
In spite of all your jealous fear
Another has won the sceptre,
And you are no longer the queen of heaven,

And your great eye is frozen,
And your lily arms are powerless,
And nevermore your revenge pursues
The god-impregnated virgin
And the wonder-working son of the god.
You, too, I recognize, Pallas Athene !
Could you not, then, with shield and wisdom,
Ward off the decay of the gods ?
You, too, I see there, you, too, Aphrodite,
Once the golden one, now the silver one !
Indeed still adorns you the girdle's love-charm,
Yet I shudder secretly at your beauty,
And if your good body desired to delight me,
Like other heroes, I would die of anguish—
As corpse-goddess you appear to me,
Venus Libitina !
No more with love looks towards you
There, the terrible Ares.
There gazes so mournfully Phoebus Apollo,
The youth. His lyre is silent
That played with such joy at the meal of the gods.
More mournfully still gazes Hephæstus,

And in truth nevermore the lame one
Interferes with Hebe's duty
And busily pours, in the assembly,
The lovely nectar. And long is extinguished
The inexhaustible laughter of gods.

You I have never loved, you gods !
For contrary to me are the Greeks,
And even the Romans to me are hateful.
Yet holy compassion and shuddering pity
Streams through my heart
As I watch you now, up there,

Abandoned gods,
Dead, night-wandering shadows,
Mist-frail, that the wind in terror scatters,
And when I consider how cowardly and windy
Are the gods who conquered you,
The new, ruling, wistful gods,
The malicious ones in humility's sheepskin—
O, then, a gloomy resentment seizes me,
And then I could break the new temples,
And fight for you, you ancient gods,
For you and your good, ambrosial right,
And before your lofty altars,
All built again, all smoking with sacrifice,
I myself could kneel and pray
And lift up my arms beseeching—

For always, far back, you ancient gods,
In earlier times, in battles of men
You constantly held to the side of the victors.
So man is, then, more generous than you,
And now in battles of gods I hold
To the side of the vanquished gods.

So I spoke, and visibly flushed
Up there, the pallid cloud-shapes,
And looked at me like dying ones,
Transfigured with pain, and vanished suddenly.
The moon hid itself now
Behind thick cloud that loomed darkly nearer.
Loud rose the rushing sound of the sea,
And victorious stood forth in the heavens
The eternal stars.

A CONSIDERATION OF SOME RECENT YOUNGER POETRY

By ROBERT HERRING

“Among the many Disadvantages attending Poetry, none seems to bear a greater Weight than that so many set up for Judges, when so very few understand a Title of the Matter.”—George Farquhar, *A Discourse Upon Comedy*.

HAVING CHOSEN THAT motto, it might seem that I should either refrain from myself setting up for a Judge or should amend Farquhar by suggesting the substitution for that word of “Poet” instead. But I am relieved of this later necessity by having no pretension to the former. I feel it ill becomes me to don the black cap of condemnation who may so easily at any time be offered that of the dunce—and as for those of my own distribution, they must be taken as given, to any who may find they fit, in pained silence. I confine myself here only to those recent books which have given me some, at any rate, pleasure.

Whilst a preoccupation with one's own favourite style or spirit should not prevent one from grappling with another, it is unprofitable as well as cowardly to simulate sympathy with that to which one is chemically allergic. But one can appreciate the existence of that in its own terms and that appreciation, when the motive behind it is trained, can bring its own pleasure . . . which, I maintain, is always worth seeking. If authors complain that I have not found as much as they'd like, I absolve myself. Pleasure was my intention, and for that selfish but thereby straightforward motive, they must salute me as much as I am willing to salute any I find. My rebukes are to be taken as regrets when it might have been more.

To set the scene before introducing the characters, let me say that the general impression is of gravity, which it

should be ; of frequently unambitious thought, which the times makes inevitable ; of the consolation of religion, again natural ; of more attention to image than echo ; of quite startling lapses of taste ; of disarming concern with affairs of the heart and of embarrassing naïvete with those of desire ; and in insistence on the private, not only personal, note in love-poetry. In this latter connection, it appears to be forgotten—or since so few seem to read, perhaps rarely realized—that for more reasons than one did the old poets address their verses to Cynthias, Chloes. One of the reasons was that it spared all concerned the indignity of wives being strip-teased upon a printed page.

3

Shortage of space often forbids my mentioning a book before it is out of print, so I will please my conscience by beginning with Norman Nicholson's comparatively recent *Five Rivers* (Faber, 6s.). The short-cut card-index for this would be Crabbe. More careful cross-reference is Landscape Poet. I am myself always wary of too great concentration upon purely visual imagery. Nevertheless, Mr. Nicholson can write of a river that it "breaks like a bottle at every turn" and "runs solid as glass". Both these seem to me as sparkling as a river itself. I am not so keen on "November sunlight floats and falls like soapsuds on the castle walls", I dislike his introducing the word "blobs" and "jamming-time" my jaws stick at. There is a lack of pattern, resulting in patchiness, in his half-rhymes for the poem *Egremont* ; more work, which means more manners to the ear, was needed here. His love of the countryside treats us to many lines such as

"The train crosses the viaduct and leaves
a caterpillar of smoke along the waves."

These make me feel that I am invited to regard one of those faded photographs in railway carriages rather than the view

itself: his agreeable image of the caterpillar smoke fades in the weakness of the second halves of each line.

Not, however, to be too taken up with the technical aspects, let it be said of his poems that they show seriousness and love, usually for the country of his "five rivers" but coming out also very pleasantly in a poem to children—

"What more can you learn to ask for in your prayers
Than years unpredicted as weather, and days
Adventurous as a lobby full of bears."

Elsewhere his thought, whilst remaining on the same level, is not lifted by such beguiling phrase. Even in its context, a statement that "every birth repudiates all dying on the earth" is open to query, whilst *The Blackberry* runs full tilt (if one can, flat-footedly) against what is or is not permissible in language—

"Grant us to know that hours rushed by
Are photographed upon God's eye,
That life and leaf are both preserved
In gelatine of Jesus' blood
And grant to us the sense to feel
The large condensed within the small."

Mr. Nicholson fails to persuade me that he has the sense to feel here the unfortunate effect of the words "photographed", "preserved", "gelatine", "condensed". He is at liberty to say those words are so chosen and so placed as to maintain the triumph of spirit over the most everyday materials. I still hold that the advertising implications of such words prevent reaction until, when one reaches the last couplet, one feels Blake said something rather like it, once; and the point is, not that Blake said it better but that if Mr. Nicholson can't say it better than Nicholson here says it, he is letting himself, and us, down by saying it at all. Similarly, his *Belshazzar* is so thinly constructed that, wondering why there seemed so many gaps, I found there were twenty "ands" in twenty-six lines. But to end this

review in the spirit in which I closed his book, let me single for thanks a beautiful *Carol*.

My next two books seem to have made more noise in the radio and reviewing world than they have in my mind. These are the newest Hogarth volumes of Laurie and Roy Fuller. Mr. Lee (*The Sun My Monument*, Hogarth, 3s. 6d.) knows what he wants to say and says it with frequent dexterity. Someone should have warned him against publishing a verse such as

“With the archways full of camels
and my ears of crying zithers,
how can I resolve the cipher
of your occidental heart?”

or am I wrong, thinking that this seems a burlesque way of saying the author is worried, lonely, and uncertain? The cipher is older than heaven, and probably without answer. But since most of us have been harassed by it, one way or another, a mere statement of its sad occasioning prompts the reflection that camels and zithers should be enjoyed for what they are or left alone. Ditto, hearts. If, that is, one wants to enjoy them. But though it is hell so many young men should be missing the best years of their life, unintensified animadversions on the effects of travel, though made by war involuntary, become for staple-diet bleak as celery sans frost.

Mr. Lee's muse knows this, for elsewhere he tends to verbal shock-tactics. He is influenced by Lorca; that cannot be helped; and he shares his contemporaries' failing of indulging in that most quickly rusting of all imagery—war's: “your lips are turreted with guns” has the further disadvantage of being one of those reversible remarks in which the main words can all move, halma-wise, into each other's places. But he can speak of August's “brick-red breath” and

“the rose born like a weakly child
of earth-bed’s pallor, death-bed’s flush”

seems to me moving, observant, precise, and consequently, beautiful. He can also say that his love is “wearing the afternoon like a copper helmet” which seems to me harsh; but I am giving others a chance to “set up for Judge” themselves. When this same love, his “mistress of oiled walking”, has said of her, “silence crowned the black sand of your hair”, I murmur *chacun à son gout* and depart, his not being mine.

I return, on his lines “Asleep we are divided By worlds our slumbers fashion” because in that is met something deeply felt as well as simply said; but when, for no other sin than turning the pages, I am forced to read

“All day the purple battle of love
as scented mouths position
soft fields of contesting languor
or jealous peaks of suspicion.”

I am repelled again, because in my day, people settled these details in private without, to continue his metaphor, gargling in public.

Mr. Lee can do better than this, and usually does. His poem which ends with

“And mouths eager to sing
to taste the many flowers of love,
open to tongue of bullets
and moan their shattered palates on the ground”

has an address to generations other than his own. This is more than can be said of much present war-poetry. He speaks, too, as a fighting man, and not as a conscript, with

“every trigger touch,
circling for death, still trembles to enclose
the human rose the target of its wish.”

But when he permits himself

“the winging flocks of migratory birds
who cannot speak for freedom, yet are free”

one feels he has not asked himself—from what? Not from the necessity to migrate, any more than are we from that of fighting, each in his own way, for freedom. And here do we not come up against the short commons of much younger poetry? Not that its thought is not developed, for war allows little time or condition for that, but that it starts off with insufficient thought to be hardened, or even cold-storaged, by war? Mr. Lee can write a poem about a milkmaid in which, believe it or not, the dairy duty makes her think of suckling her own infants.

I have quoted, I hope, sufficient from him at his best to show that it was with surprise that I found such a slovenly rendering of a tawdry theme as

“ Crooning on the water’s edge
the cabaret prepares her nest,
hatching hollow eggs of dust
from the dancers’ painted lust.”

These lines are followed by the trouble with camels and zithers already quoted and if I am asked why I seem to harp, I can only say I am sorry, but there is about as much muscle as in macaroni about the idea, and as for the words, they play halma again. Try to type the verse and see how readily they change places and how confused one becomes, “hollow on the water’s edge,” or was it “hatching”? Perhaps that was the last and surely, at any rate, the eggs were painted?

Mr. Fuller (*A Lost Season*, Hogarth, 3s. 6d.) has a poem of much the same nature. His is about some feelthy post-cards, which he didn’t like. It is a worried little piece. He himself was so worried by the pictures, that he wrote to his girl about them; which to one reader at least, only confused the issue.

However, he worries about other things—animals, mankind, the world, himself, the war. Mainly the war. He writes “ Before me in the evening an aircraft is speckled

with tiny brown and crimson birds ; the plain extends to an escarpment which is lit by the curtained sun as by a candle ; and then there is the great curve of the earth and after, you, whom two oceans and a war divides" (*sic*). I have had to print this as prose, to save space ; but readers will no doubt be able to divide it at the line-points the author intended : " which " is the end of the third.

Mr. Fuller is emphatic on the boringness of war, but I fancy he hasn't yet discovered the difference between expressing and communicating boredom. He is otherwise observant ; sincere, as *The Legions* witness ; but ingenuous, as when he addresses a conscripted African—

" Because you would not believe me if I could
tell you it is for you, the approved, the good
only desire to die."

For, do they ? Isn't death-wish too easy ? Haven't most of us, at last, shown it isn't death-wish we've got, but life-will ? And to his comments on his working party,

" How, when my only rank is consciousness,
can I despise them, far less pity, bless ? "

I cannot help replying, " We see what you mean, chum, but there's no need to be so bloody patronizing about it." . . . I quote these lines, not to make fun, but to show, what is often present, a short-circuit between thought and speech, so that between loose thinking and slipshod word-using, sometimes a twist is given that can scarcely have been intended. Elsewhere, there is a good deal on Edward Thomas lines—

" And of the men there's nothing to be said
Only events, with which they wrestle, can
Transfigure them or make them other than
Things to be loved or hated and soon dead."

I think I cannot do better than quote the first poem in the book—

"Just as the lives of lions are made
Shabby with rifles,
This great geography shrinks into sad
And personal trifles.

For those who are in love and are exiled
Can never discover
How to be happy; looking upon the wild
They see for ever.

The cultivated acre of their pain;
The clouds like dreams
Involved, improbable: the endless plain
Precisely as it seems."

This shows Mr. Fuller's technique and thought at their surest, and his spirit at its most characteristic. Otherwise for my liking there are too many lines such as "Suddenly from the radio came a swirl of classical emotion" or "the music and the shadows in the dark Cinema stir a huge authentic feeling".

4

It may be gathered that my taste would respond to more richness. Yes. Rich awareness of life, in any of its aspects seems to me to express itself in richness—of rhythm, of image, or of choice of words. I am not unreservedly attached to the speaking voice in poetry, for I hear enough speaking daily; it is for the things beyond reach of the speaking voice that I turn to poetry and I feel that, just as Wordsworth's heart leapt up on beholding a rainbow, so a ringing phrase makes the mind sing—just as a singing, or rousing, mind instinctively strikes out a ringing phrase.

For these reasons, the poets of this batch that seem to me most successful are Fred Marnau, Alex Comfort, David Gascoyne. These stride where others creep. Both Marnau and Comfort write much of death; but with a vigour that is far from deceased. Theirs is the outcry or resolving of men caught up too much, too soon, in death—but it is

not that of those only frailty fibred in life. I do not feel with their work that I simply have to be sorry for them. Instead, I feel that I am glad to go with them. I do not say that I necessarily would, but that they persuade me to feel this—out of response to their zest. For to suffer is to live, and to make vivid expression is to create out of suffering, to rise out of death, as all life in some degree is, but poetry a high one.

Death may be many things, or nothing; but whatever it is cannot be separated from life, and those who consider it naturally seem to me commonly far less “gloomy” than those who sit down in the desert of their own self-absorption and complain of the flies.

Again, personal taste enters in, and I would not seem alien to reflection. Your reflective poet, in truth, looks outward. He does not, as do some of our “quiet” writers, hang on the world the misty nimbus of his caul, so that life is seen, as it were, through a lard bladder of life-abnegation. This is to be only extravert *manqué*.

The real reflective takes in the world; does not display himself on it, like country laundry on a hedge. He sees—and the more he sees, the further he sees, the more is he poet. And what he sees—the berries, the boulders, the way men’s feet instinctively kick against these while their hands break the spray of the former they love; the crags, the fish-shaped fanning rivers; the colour of live human skin, light behind leaf, and the line of a panther; the barbed wire of a voice, the prayer-wheel fluttering of corn: all these he takes and in the crystal of his mind turns to the future; which is (since for most of us “man never is but always to be blest” with articulation), the future we aspire to: of having felt—now knowing. Of having seen, now grasped. Now grasped—henceforth to use.

The poet is the artificer of what to most of us is our mind’s molten metal; which we let go at that. Like most

things molten, let go too far, and therefore dreaded at the source. People's distrust of poets is as reminders of the melting; the making is not so well remembered—nor do sufficient poets pay enough attention to the making, so that they have only themselves to thank that no one else does.

From which ramble, let us return.

Alex Comfort has the gift of sight, as well as of tongue. His "polished" snake that leaves in his hand its "unregenerate" skin, commands commendation, and his "all ricks are the wind's gold organs after the year" from me rapture. But his sight is not vapid. It is informed by a subtle thought whose exercise is a satisfaction to watch. In the first poem of his *Elegies* (Routledge, 5s.) he deliberately sees "the flowers not the skull that fed them" and "imagined rivers in a summer country Wash the cold evil from the land we knew". But he knows that

"what we shall bury with our first-born now is not corruption only, nor virtue"

"the good falsehood, the kind lie that hid the hopeless rock, the desperate pit."

The Eighth Elegy and the Epitaph "One whom I knew," will be known to our readers. I think I have only to suggest that they consider the thought behind such a line as "All trees are protests of the numberless dead" in his Second Elegy to wish to become familiar with the rest of the poems in this book.

Fred Marnau (*The Wounds of the Apostles*, Grey Walls Press, 7s. 6d.) sees "the shepherd's hat, black cardinal" and sees that

"we, branded and curbed by the ache of the world,
are sentries and sanctifiers."

Not, be it noticed, victims; although he writes primarily of suffering, as it would be impossible not to do, with his experience.

Mr. Marnau is a Czech poet writing in German and in this, his first volume published in England, the German text is printed opposite the English translation. This makes the book doubly interesting, for Mr. Marnau is not an easy poet to translate. His words are not sills for homing thoughts, but springboards to wild realms and even they are springboards to his thought. Moreover, the expression of that is conditioned by the language he works in, so that anyone who seeks to translate his thought is apt to find he has translated only the language. Mr. Sigler does this with loyal literalness ; there are moments when he is caught in that familiar translator's net of seeming to be insufficiently familiar with either tongue and when Marnau writes

“Das Wort ist alt und rindenscharf
geworden : Gassenfund der Zeit.”

I don't feel Sigler gains by re-punctuating to

“The world is old and crusty-edged,
become the street refuse of time.”

Here there seems to me a failure to appreciate the elusive essence which has made Czech thought so sympathetic to the English. But at least, he plays no tricks, he gives what Marnau says. It is only that what Marnau means is so often more than that, and so I, for one, feel that sometimes in English the hard form of his thought suffers in the apparent shapelessness of the words. To avoid it, the poems would have to be re-cast, with every attention to vowels, rhythm, and the English equivalents of these (there is vast difference between the English “s” and its occurrence in German, which further has a plethora of “n”s). There might also have to be a difference of imagery, to “give” the identical vision. By which time, the poems would scarcely be Marnau's, and I am forced to repeat one can only digest, as opposed to savour, a poem in the language in which it was written. I hasten to add that this implies no ingratitude to

Mr. Sigler for enabling those with no German to savour this vigorous poet.

Regular readers of this review will know his *Liturgical Hymn to a Landscape* and *My Cousin Maccabeus*. Both gain from being seen in relation to his other work, of which the main is the sequence giving the book its title. It is as difficult to describe him as to translate. It is no distinction to say he is a hurt or a fighting spirit, for to-day that is merely to be Private Double O Blank, in the shades. There are no shades for Marnau; there is jagged darkness, slashed by a sun he knows may be lightning—and he forces himself up to see. Thinking of Himalayan film-records, I have a strong impression of climbing to Tibetan-green dawn. But whereas few dare Everest alone, even their own, it is the self-marshalling I like in his poetry and the seared sense of being indomitable, though insufficient. He looks at his own goal and at others striving for their own, the same or lesser, and Everest's ice-plume shrieks to him. Sometimes from the goal, sometimes from those he had thought were attempting it with him, sometimes from himself. But he does not let himself go. He is not hanging on so gingerly that he cannot cup one hand, to holler across the valley

“Denn unsre Heimat liegt in keinem Land
Und glaube mir, nicht anders ist die Welt”

(lines which become dull in English). And when he reaches, at it were, Camp 5, and pauses, it is with

“So much injustice? It was want and grief.”

Mr. Gascoyne, in *Poems, 1937-42* (P. L. Editions, Nicholson and Watson, 10s. 6d.) says much the same with his “The voice of prophecy destroys the speaker”. I take other lines to show that he can write, for that is more than can be said of many who feel impelled to publish. He writes of a sun “of nascent ardour in the sapphire dome”; of night, “blackness lolls on the air”; of Spring, which we can “still recognize, though scarcely understand”;

of siege-conditions, May, 1940, "How sharply their invading steel must shine!" and presents a *pieta*—

"The Mother, whose dead Son's dear head
Weighs like a precious blood-incrusted stone
On her unfathomable breast."

This diction is not decoration, but is necessary for the turns of his thought, which coils between heights and deeps. He thinks that for Man,

"over the edge
of a thin inch's fraction lie in wait for him
Bottomless depths of roaring emptiness,"

but he can insist, in one of his French poems, that

"Tout est triomphe et toute plainte
Est réconciliation"—

"Toute plainte est réconciliation
Avec le lamentable."

and then he can ruin a *Farewell Chorus* by bringing in "wet hankies" and give us in *Chambre d'Hôtel* a piece as jejeune as it sounds, so that one is saddened at the necessity several of these poets feel for an authority outside themselves to regulate their taste. But though his poems, like Marnau's, are intensely personal, again, like Marnau's, they are never private.

5

Readers must draw their own conclusions. I have drawn attention to the books nor have I shirked exposing that my bias is towards those who transcend the world whilst away from those un-at-home in it. The general conclusions mentioned in section 2 are further exemplified in an anthology of mainly even younger poets, *Sailing Tomorrow's Seas* (Fortune Press, 5s.), except that it has less lapses of taste and more gravity. This is so pervasive as to give the book a welcome unity and be, as well, an augury for most of the authors; if they will work more, and possibly publish less. Poetry is not a competition.

SONG

No, I WILL never forget you and your great eyes
O animal and power

You will be stalking
The wood where I am walking

You will lie asleep
In the places where I weep

And you will wake and move
In the first hour of love

And in the second hour
Love flee before your power.

No, I will never forget you and your great eyes
Angel and challenger.

You will be there
Dressed in your wild hair
Angel and animal
Wherever I may dwell,
Wherever I may sleep
You have the dreams to keep.

To pierce me with your tears,
To quiet all my fears,
To blaze the naked breast
And shiver it from rest,
To suck the milk of love
And that same milk to give,
To rend and make me wild
To be mother and child.

Walking the still landscape by the rock and the bone
You will be beside me when I am most alone.

MAY SARTON

THE WILD DUCK

By RUMER GODDEN

THE WILD DUCK came down on the river at dawn.

The river was the Jhelum in the vale of Kashmir ; it ran past the villages below the mountains into the town of Srinagar, with its seven bridges and its welter of high wooden houses on the banks in the snow and its temples rising in pagoda shapes with their steps leading down, iced, into the water. Above the town, the living boats were moored under the chenar trees and the river ran by them softly, so held by the ice above that the water was slow.

Winter comes with an almost Russian fierceness to Kashmir and like the old Russian peasantry, the people are too poor and too oppressed to live in it. There are forty days of death and hunger, then twenty and then ten. They do not attempt to live and for five months in the year the land is sealed ; except for necessity no one works, no one washes and everyone hardly wakes. In the villages the houses are shut, and the cattle are closed into the ground floor so that the steam of their midden rises up and warms the rooms above. Even the boatmen close their boats down with mats and huddle inside in their vast shawls. Everyone—man, woman, and child—looks pregnant in Kashmir in winter because under their robes, over their stomachs they carry a kangri, an earthenware pot filled with live coals and held in a basket with a shielded handle. This is the fire pot which they keep with them and carry out with them and take to sleep with them and which makes it possible to them to face the winter and that inhibits every movement that they make. There is no vigour in the Kashmiri in the cold ; he hibernates.

In the boats, under the mats, with their firepots and their shawls the boatmen slept and sat and talked a little and drank tea and waited for the spring. At dark they went to bed

and it was late into the day before they woke. Why should they wake? There was nothing to wake them. Khaliqa, the eldest son of the boatman Subhana, heard his wife get up; she was an inconvenient woman, she needed to go out but he turned again with his face to the side of the boat, and he slept. His wife went out on to the bank in the dawn and in the dawn the wild duck came down.

The winter dawn broke late and when it had broken nobody saw it; the people slept. Khaliqa's wife scurried in and the bank was silent when the wild duck came down. Even the domestic ducks, tethered by one of their legs, slept with their heads turned and sunk in the feathers of their backs. There were hundreds of ducks along the river and it was fitting that the first light showed duck colours; cream mottled with grey and brown, and the bottle green colours of duck necks. The grey was in the hulls of the boats and the browns in the mats that hung along their sides; the snow was trodden to cream brown slush on the banks. There was more grey in the trunks of the chenar trees and darker brown in their down dropping winter nuts; grey steps led to the water and there was grey in the sky with a promise of snow; even now, in the dawn, one occasional flake came down silently upon the water before the day had begun. The green was the water, thick, translucent, dark; green like a duck's neck feathers, little bottle glass, turning to black under the boats, turning lighter, more lucent as it lapped the steps; green; cold; dark with ice; and the wild duck came down upon the green as silently as the snow flakes and its wings folded along her back and she rocked a little on the water as she settled.

She did not know where she had come. Anything she might have known was blotted from her by her hunger. She was starving. She immediately turned herself tail upwards in the water and her bill dabbled frantically in the

weeds. She found what she wanted ; the weeds were heavy with particles of ice but they were not frozen, there was life and food amongst them and the wild duck went down and came up, came up and went down, and the point of her tail was continually turned up to the sky that was slowly filling with the day.

The wild duck came up, dipped, came up. She had no self but her hungry emptiness ; she was simply a duck, wild, come out of the winter sky attracted by the weeds. She had found her food ; the river here was warmer, free of ice, warmed and broken by its life of boats.

There were house-boats, cook boats where the boatmen lived attached to the houseboats, wood boats, rice-boats, grass-boats, ferry boats, little boats ; later in the day some boats would be poled along, handled under the bridges, paddled from side to side. All along the banks the litter of human beings lay silently in the coming light ; dogs, bicycles, wood piles, water pots, tethered geese and fowls. Presently, from one boat and another, the first wood smoke went up.

There was a village just upstream, tall houses with overhanging balconies and a tall thin screen of poplar trees ; now from the village came the sound of clogs stamping on the ice and the sound of a tap opened and the water splashing on the ground. The wild duck came up and sat motionless with her head turned on her neck to the sound.

The village was upstream and upwind ; the alarming sound floated down but the current of the water still parted steadily around the duck, still steady, still undisturbed. The current reassured her ; she paddled with her feet to keep her place in the water and her feet were the colour of the orange peel that floated down in the debris of the river.

And now the sun had risen and the watery winter light picked up fresh colours from the life on the river ; the colour of the orange peel and the dress of a child who

scooped up water in a teapot out of the river, the copper colour of the teapot and jewel blue in the wild duck's wing; the blue distinguished her from the ducks by the boats, the tame tied-up domestic ducks fattening themselves with sleep and scraps and tit-bits out of the weeds.

The weeds were a feast to the wild duck. To the west, where she came from, the lakes were frozen, the reeds embedded in ice; the reeds and the wild iris, and the bare muddied shores were stiff in a shroud of it; the hills at the foot of the mountains were brown and withered as if they were scorched with the cold, and the water in the rice fields was covered with a casing of ice in each field. The only life and movement was from the far nets of the fishermen where the current stayed unfrozen in the lake and from the fires of the charcoal burners of the hills and a rumble and fall of an avalanche, up the distant mountain. The wild duck had come in for food. Her hunger dulled her senses. She dipped and rose.

In the boat a mat was lifted and snow fell into the water with a loud splash. The wild duck flew out of sight. No one had noticed her yet.

Khaliqa came into the front of the boat and sat down in his shawl. He felt heavy and dull. Khaliqa was a born boatman; his father was a boatman and his grandfather and great-grandfather's father, and they were all shikaris, hunters, too; when they were not in their boats they were camped. They handled boats and they handled guns; both were as natural to them as their own hands. Khaliqa was the fine tall man of a fine family; he was young, lithe; strong. Now in the winter he sat with his fire pot in his shawl.

To-day he hated it. He hated the winter, the inaction, the heavy dullness in his bones. He was overladed with the winter and as he sat that morning suddenly, like a crack in its ice, a memory came back to him. Last summer he had been out ibex shooting, last summer into Yarkand

beyond Leh and the valley of the Indus ; very far away, up and up in strange far gorges, empty except for the flocks that nibbled dusty herbage at the foot of the hills and the eagle's occasional cry and the queer, even to Khaliqa queer, broken notes of the flutes the shepherds had.

They had come to a village grown out of the gorge, where the houses were made of its colourless earth but where a glacier came down and there was a grove of quince and mulberry trees. Khaliqa remembered how startling had been the colour of their green. There they left the tents and left the servants and went up—up—up—with two local hunters to haul the Colonel up the crags. Khaliqa followed with the Colonel's gun and Khaliqa, loaded with the rifle, had been the equal of the mountain hunters there.

He remembered how he had been then. Then his body had been fulfilled, it was quick, awake, intense ; its power and its speed and its sensation, its every fibre and small nerve, was alive. Each movement of his body was as necessary as an animal's ; the parts that were beautiful and the parts that were bad, the parts he enjoyed and parts that troubled him were all drawn up into a supreme wholeness ; he was one, whole, for this supreme use. Even his shoes were part of him, even the last hairs of his moustache were necessary to the completeness of this whole beautiful enduring Khaliqa. They went up and up into a giddy rarer air, and then the local hunter pointed, and following the line of his long brown finger they saw an ibex an eagle's flight above them, standing on a pocket of rock that showed through a cleft a pocket of sky.

The hunter on the left of Khaliqa said "Aaah" in his throat and the sound made a gulf in the abyss, dropping down like a stone ; Khaliqa had moved an angry hand but, as if the sound had truly gone down, not up, the ibex did not stir. There had been a quality of agony in that, a tension that hurt the breath more than the height ; the

Colonel was panting and Khaliqa remembered how his own heart hammered with thick thumping clumsy strokes that would have taken the breath of anyone less strong and whole than he.

The ibex was still there and as they watched, the sun glinted on its horns and it lifted its head to show the tuft and sweep of its beard.

They had to track and pin it. Up again, again up and up, when not a stone must roll and fall as had that sound ; they were closer now, up and up, until through a splitted rock they saw a giddy slant of sky and crag—and the ibex. They had found a sight.

Now the ibex was below them and they saw with an eagle's eye ; the planes of the peak were below them too, and, the glacier that now had a blue reflection from the sky ; they saw plane and plane of rock face, rock crag, slips, and, a sound more than a sight, the river far below. Now the ibex was feeding, unsuspicious, eating the tufts of herbage, and to see it eat as the kids had nibbled in the valley, gave Khaliqa a sudden wild pain that was the tensest moment of living he had ever known ; more tense than the chase ; even than the shot. That simple thing of the ibex nibbling had parted a skin that had lain in his mind, a skin between the wild and the tame, and always after that tame Khaliqa and wild Khaliqa were integrant. He had said, speaking behind his lips to the Colonel, " Now Sahib keep low. A little to the left." There was no mistake, and while the sound of the shot still rang from rock to rock the ibex threw up its head and fell on its knees and tumbled off the crag.

Why should Khaliqa think of that now ? All morning he kept thinking of it again. The memory kept coming up. His mind had hiccups and he would not quiet them.

The morning in the boat went on as all such mornings ; his father's friends and his own friends came in to sit and

talk, and the air grew thicker between the matted sides of the boat and the hookah passed and there was comfortable talk about money. Only in Khaliqa's mind the memory came up; the ibex and the climb and the crag against the sky; he saw the sun on the polished horn and the sudden blue of the glacier and it seemed to him impossible that he had ever seen them; he could believe in the feel of the horn as it lay in his hand after the ibex was dead but had he, had he, seen it alive, flashing in the sun? And the colour of the glacier seemed strange, faint and far as hope; and the village seemed like one of the villages in his father's tales. Had he been there a year ago and seen the green leaves of the mulberry trees and pitched his tent and bought wild honey from the people of the valley? He put away his *kangri*; it seemed too hot, it pothered him and the folds of his shawl were heavy on his shoulders; he let it fall on the floor beside him as he sat and immediately he was cold and had to put it on again.

And while they were talking the wild duck came down again and settled on the water near the boat.

The river's own tame ducks were loosened now; they were swimming up and down in tidy convoys leaving a tidy pointed wake behind them. As soon as the wild duck came down they immediately came to, and swam around it, and immediately their shapes looked clumsy and dull; they were no longer tidy and pleasing, they were platinous, over white or wrongly plumaged with the darkened colours of their wings and necks.

The wild duck rocked among them; except for the movement of the water she was utterly still, she seemed to be floating in the water, not lying in it stoutly as they did. She was still; she paddled her feet but she did not move her eyes. As if she withdrew them for choice, her feathers seemed to fit her closely with elegance; she looked small, light, graceful, and the colours of her markings, stronger

than the mottled coloured ducks, were definite and clear in the winter daylight and the blue bar in her wings deep, azure, flashed in their eyes. Resentment spread in a ripple around her and still she paddled her feet and rocked lightly, lightly as the ripple grew.

In the boat the air grew closer and more odorous; the hookah passed to Khaliqa and he inhaled it with a melodious bubbling on its water but it did not soothe him. The talk went on and he slumped with discontent silent in his corner. "Khaliqa does not say a word," said Mohammed his friend.

His father looked at him. "By his colour he is cold," said his father. "He looks that he is sick," and he called through the partition, "Bring to Khaliqa some good hot tea."

Khaliqa said not a word and presently Mohammed began to play. It made a noise like a tortured violin and the noise in the shrouded boat was near and very loud. Khaliqa's wife brought a bowl of salt tea from which a spiral of steam and a smell of spice went up. She pressed it into Khaliqa's hand. It was very hot, the heat came through the sides of the bowl against his palms and irritated him; more heat, more soothing, more allaying, more deadening down when he wanted not to be dead, when he was over dead, when his mind strained to be alive; and the maddening little tune of Mohammed's bow went on, like a series of little fierce strings around his ears, and the strings and the heat and the closeness clashed suddenly in Khaliqa's head and he gave a cry and threw his bowl of tea across the ground.

There was consternation on the faces. There was a silence that was more wracking than the music. His father cleared his throat and his face under his old folded turban was outraged. It was incumbent on Khaliqa to explain; there must be something said; some explanation;

something "Disgusting", cried Khaliqa. "The tea was disgustingly cold."

Relief and happiness. The tea was cold. What, to give the boy cold tea when he is sick and chill! There was immediate shouting to the wives, scolding them, a jangling of earrings and whispers in the next compartment of the boat, and an immediate dipping of the teapot in the river to be filled.

The child was sent to dip. It had to put its head outside and, as it bent, it saw the conglomeration of ducks across the water, it watched with the teapot in its hand and a flake of snow fell directly down upon the wild duck's back. The child saw the flash of brighter blue, the smaller shape and its cry went up, "*Arman Batukh*, Wild duck, Wild duck."

This time Khaliqa did not betray himself. The cry might have been a stab in the way it thrust into him, but he put his shawl and fire pot down and stood up in one movement from his heels and was gone swiftly but with no look of haste. He was no quicker than Mohammed who was out on the prow of the boat loosing the small paddling boat, the *shikara*, but it was Khaliqa who stepped to the prow of that. He was no quicker than his father either who handed him the barbed spear and sent them shooting out to the ducks in a thrust that was the real counterpart of the cry that had pierced Khaliqa through.

Now they were out upon the water, Khaliqa standing balanced on the prow and Mohammed sitting paddling in the stern. The boat was slight and light and Mohammed's heart-shaped paddle broke the water with hardly a sound; he kept its handle from the side and Khaliqa stood holding the spear like a harpoon.

They sped towards the ducks and Khaliqa balanced from foot to foot, tightening his muscles, tautening, loosening without thinking, all of him alive and ready.

The memory was not a memory now it was alive in him. The speed of the boat, the intentness of his eyes made a blur of the banks, the water, the sky, the sky was in the water, the water in the sky, there was again that giddy plane of height, planes spinning below him, reflected planes, sky spinning above him and only one small object small as the bead of a gun in front of his eyes.

And the wild duck had her eyes fixed on the tame ducks. They were a new experience for her and they acted as decoys swimming round her ; like her, paddling the water with their orange feet, but not stationary, swimming round and round. She watched them and her wariness, usually erect as the antennae of her tail, was lulled by lesser danger. She was bemused ; unconscious of herself she watched the ducks.

Into the ducks hurtled the spear. It came with a deadly aim, strong with speed, straight at the wild duck's breast. The breast half rose in the water to meet it, half too late ; a domestic white duck had risen before it with a quack that rang in Khaliqa's ears for days and nights, a quack that was like the flat of a hand in his face. His hand was empty, the spear had gone ; the white duck flapped and cried and through the ends of its outstretched wing the spear had passed, deflected, only deflected, not turned from its path, and one barb struck the wild duck's breast, tearing the feathers and a morsel of flesh passing on with them into the water where it struck again, was brought up, and lay harmlessly floating in the river.

And the boat was carried on too ; by its impetus it shot away to the further bank into the mud and snow.

The wild duck struggled in the water and blood oozed from her breast in a thick trickle that immediately changed to a stream in the water ; it was dark on her breast and clear and scarlet in the stream. She struggled and dipped sideways to the weeds while the white duck made loud

rending noises that were as loud as the shouts from the boats and the bank.

The exhilaration of the wind died down from Khaliqa's ears, the world settled into its accustomed places as the boat struck the bank with a thud, driving into the snow.

"You have it," cried Mohammed looking back.

Mohammed was never accurate, he said what he hoped would become true, but the wild duck gave a cry and rose into the air; she rose with a clumsy motion, splashing, scattering drops of water, but she rose and her wings, even on the wounded side, could fly.

The white duck flapped but the wild duck lifted and flew and her cry floated down with the solitary flakes of snow; a single cry that was mournful, wounded, wild; and the tame ducks paddled and eddied round the place where she had been and the stain of blood was washed out on the current; they dipped their bills looking for her, turning indifferent tails upon their wounded comrade.

Already from his boat the owner of the wounded duck was paddling out to parley with Khaliqa, and already Khaliqa's father was coming in a borrowed boat to meet him and defend his son and to dispute the price; already mats were lifted all up and down the river waiting for the quarrel, and Khaliqa's wife was quickly brewing the second tea with extra spice to soothe the episode away. Mohammed had turned the boat to go back for the spear, Mohammed was silent. Khaliqa knew it was for him to speak.

Khaliqa was sealed. His face had settled into a sulky despair. Mohammed paddled, waiting.

"I thought I had it," said Khaliqa with a mighty effort as he knelt to get his spear. That was all that he could say. He could not laugh.

THE WANDERER'S JOURNEY IS DONE

DROWSILY RIDES THE ship on the harbour swell,
the day's sharp grimaces retch into the night;
the sailor learns his desires in a shabby light.
The traveller turns to the inn and the lover to love,
the spurned and broken creep over the frontiers of sleep,
the haunted throw desperate vows they never will keep.

The treacherous oceans of love once opened their shores,
he had crossed the seasons of anger with motions of peace,
searched the rough winds of hate for the lost release.
It came so quietly, he was never aware
of a consummation, or the white heart of the flame—
a sad voice crying, crying his own name.

MAURICE LINDSAY

TO A WELSH GIRL, BRIEFLY KNOWN

BLACK VILLAGES, BLUE mountains and broad singing
over lost valleys of the heart's desire;
the steel pick on a steamy coalface ringing
above the Welsh tongue's running heather fire . . .

You are all these, who are the breath of Wales—
wet rocks lit by the sun your mirrored eyes
whose laughter holds the stone rage of the Gaels,
the sharp knife hidden underneath their sighs.

For me, you are another island turning
away from the ship, the last white stretch of shore
whose forward winds are edged with timeless yearning
Oh, how shall the hurt know less, the heart feel more?

MAURICE LINDSAY

THE DYING STALLION

By FRED URQUHART

THE STALLION WAS in one field ; the two mares in another ; an empty field separated them. The stallion stood in the corner beside the gate, his neck outstretched, his tail held high. The mares bunched in the corner nearest him, whinnying enticingly. Suddenly the stallion reared and, wheeling quickly, he set off at a gallop round the field. In the middle he stopped, reared again, then set off at full gallop towards the gate. He leaped . . .

Old William Petrie of Duncraggie Mains was standing at the door of his Potato Store. His sons-in-law, Dick Jeffreys and Bill Johnston, were examining his Arran Pilot Seed, discussing it, comparing it unfavourably with their own. Petrie was not listening. The two young men did this every Saturday afternoon. He was staring at a puddle in the middle of the close.

"Here's trouble !" he cried when the three horses came galloping around the corner of the steading. He rushed into the middle of the close, trying to stop them. But they swerved and galloped down past the silo. The old man shouted and began to run after them. Men appeared from odd corners, following him. But his sons-in-law did not exert themselves ; they ambled after the old man, grinning at each other, still talking about the quality of their Arran Pilots.

By the time they reached the corner of the field beside the silo the stallion and the two mares had been cornered. Old Petrie and the first horseman were putting a halter on the stallion. "Ay, ye've had a run the day, laddie," the old man said, patting the beast's satiny black neck. "There now, there," he muttered soothingly as the animal plunged with excitement when the mares were led away. "We canna have this. Ye canna go wi' yer own mother !"

"What're the bandages on his legs for ?" Dick said,

straddling with his hands in the pockets of his tight khaki breeches, eyeing the stallion.

"His hocks were a bittie weak," the old man said. "So the vet put them on yesterday. They weren't that weak that ye couldna leap that gate, though, were they, ye rascal?" He laughed, slapping the beast's neck.

"Ye wouldna like to ride him across to the stable, Dick?" he said, thinking how well his huge young son-in-law would look on the big horse.

But Dick laughed and said: "No, no, Mr. Petrie, I wouldna trust myself on his back. I dinna like the look o' the brute. Horses are just beasts I have no use for. Ye ken that fine."

"Come on then, laddie," Petrie said, stroking the stallion's nose and leading him away. "Young men aren't what they were in my young days. I wouldna ha'e needed a second invitation to back a fine strappin' cratur' like yersel'. But young men aren't what they were . . ."

The old man stayed for a while in the loose-box, helping the first horseman to rub down the stallion. Apart from the fact that he was sweating a lot the stallion seemed none the worse of his adventure. The old man was in no hurry to go into the house. He knew that his two unmarried daughters and their married sisters would be screaming at each other all over the house. After a while one of his grandchildren came out to tell him to come in for his tea.

They were half-way through tea when the maid came to tell the old man that the first horseman wanted to see him in the kitchen. "He's nae pleased wi' the looks o' the staig," she said.

Petrie made to rise, but a chorus from his daughters pushed him down. "Finish your tea in peace," they shrieked. "Your horse can wait."

"That's the beauty o' tractors," Dick said, shoving a huge lump of cake into his grinning mouth. "If they do

break down they dinna need instant attention. Ye'll have to get tractors, Mr. Petrie. I dinna see why ye winna put yer horses awa'. Great big smelly brutes, I canna be doin' wi' them."

Petrie never answered, though Bill helped Dick in baiting him. He gulped down his tea, and as soon as it was politic he rose. Dick and Bill rose, too, pushing back their chairs noisily, grinning at each other. "We'd better go and help the old man to mourn, laddie," Dick said, putting his arm round Bill's shoulder and drawing him to the door.

The stallion was lying on his back, rolling about on the floor of the loose-box. He held his legs stiffly in the air, and every now and then he would stretch out his neck, biting in the region of his belly, trying to bite the bandages that bound his hind legs. The four men stood and watched him. "I dinna like the looks o' him at all, Wullie," the first horseman said to Petrie. "I doot he's hurt himself' someway when he jumpit that gate."

"Ay, he's dyin', I doot," the old men said. "I never saw a horse in such a bad way."

"Havers," Dick said. "It's just wind that's botherin' him. Listen to him fartin'. He's just got a pain in the guts." He seized old Petrie's stick and poked the stallion in the belly, "Up, man!" he roared. "Get up, ye lazy swine! Up! Up!" He whacked the stallion across the belly and the haunches. "Up, ye lazy devil, up!"

The stallion made an effort to rise, but fell back, snorting with exhaustion. His huge body writhed about among the straw and dung, his hide glistening with sweat. His eyes rolled wildly; his neck curved like a snake as he tried to reach his hind legs.

Old Petrie went towards him, speaking softly. "What ails ye, laddie? Have ye hurt yersel', man? Come on then, up ye get, laddie. Up ye get, like a good boy."

Dick pulled him back roughly. "D'ye want to get hurt, Mr. Petrie?" he shouted. He reached out with the stick, careful not to get within reach of the stallion's floundering legs, and he whacked the beast across the belly again. "Get up, ye big lazy swine!" he roared. "Get up when ye're bid. Up! Up!" And he slashed the beast across the genitals.

"Ay, I thought that would make ye rise," he said triumphantly when the horse nickered with pain and with a supreme effort staggered to his feet. "There's nothin' like kennin' the right place to hit a beast—or a man for that matter!" he laughed, nudging Bill.

The horse stood, shaking his head. His body was trembling. He began to move towards the men—for sympathy, old Petrie knew—lifting his hind legs high. He stretched out his nose towards them. Dick stepped back, lifting the stick threateningly. "Get away, ye nasty brute, get away!"

But old Petrie reached out and stroked the beast's nose. "Poor laddie," he muttered. "There's somethin' far wrong wi' ye, man." He patted his neck, sliding his hand soothingly up and down the withers. "There, laddie, there, ye'll soon be all right again."

"Awa' in and phone the vet, Bill," he said.

"There's no need," Dick said. "Ye'll just be wasting yer siller. Cut these bandages off his legs. That's what's wrong wi' him. They're too tight. See, he's aye bitin' at them. It's that and a sore guts that's wrong wi' him. See, there he is, fartin' again."

"Go and phone for the vet, Bill," old Petrie said again.

He stood, stroking the horse about the head and neck, speaking softly to him, while Dick told the first horseman in a loud voice what he considered was wrong with the animal. He stood well back from it, one hand in his breeches pocket, the other caressing his bottom. Every

time the horse moved towards him he shooed it away, shouting: "Get away, ye nasty brute!"

The vet arrived in about half an hour and took off the bandages. "Though it's not them that's hurting him," he said. "I don't know what it is, but we'll give him a shot to quieten him."

Holding the stallion's head while the vet pushed the needle into him, the old man was surprised that the horse did not give a plunge. "Poor laddie," he said softly. "Ye're worn out."

The vet said he'd come back in an hour or two to see how things were. "But frankly I don't like the look of him, Mr. Petrie," he said. "I don't think he'll last till morning."

Bill and Dick went into the house to play cards with another brother-in-law who had just arrived. The old man, feeling that he could no longer bear to see the horse's pain, went into the stable and sat there in the darkness. He felt comforted by the sounds the other horses made, moving and champing in their stalls. He knew that his three hefty sons-in-law would be playing three-handed Bridge in front of the fire while all around them their wives and sisters-in-law would be shrieking to each other about rations and Women's Guild Meetings and about how few eggs their hens were laying. The wireless would be on full blast, but nobody would be listening to it. And the children would be screaming and running out and in, banging doors. And every now and then Dick would yell: "Get to hell out of here, the whole lot of you." Everybody, including the children, would think this a great joke.

About ten o'clock the vet came back and examined the stallion again. "He's ruptured himself when he leapt that gate," he said.

The old man stood in the corner of the loose box, watch-

ing the horse walking round and round in a circle. He was thinking of his son who had been killed at Dunkirk, and who was the only one in his family who had had tastes like his own. Dimly he was aware that Bill and Dick and his other son-in-law, James, had come in. They stood, hunched in their greatcoats, keeping well back from the circling horse. The vet stood in the middle, watching it. The animal moved slowly, like a dream-like horse in a circus, lifting his legs stiffly. Nobody spoke. The only sounds in the place were the deep breathing of the horse and the heavy slow pounding of his hooves. Even in his dejection there was something magnificent about him. He completely dwarfed the three hefty young men who stood staring compassionlessly at him.

The vet began to explain to them what was wrong with the horse. "I doubt he's finished," he said. "He'll never be any use again."

The old man sat down, crouching in misery on the lid of the corn-bin, not listening to what the vet was saying. He felt numb and finished. He watched the horse unseeingly as it circled more and more slowly round the loose-box, head drooping, once-proud haunches caving in, tail hanging slackly. The glossy hide was beginning to lose lustre. The large dark eyes were growing dim and pathetic. The old man wanted to stretch out his hands and touch it, willing to give all his own dying vigour to revive it, but he was afraid of the ridicule of the young men. As if waking from a dream, he heard Dick address him. He tried to rouse himself when the young man shouted his name. He shook his head, straightening his shoulders. "Ay?" he said.

"Ye'd better cut him," Dick said, "and yoke him to a cart."

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

MODERN WELSH POETRY. An Anthology edited by KEIDRICH RHYS. Faber. 6s.

WELSH POETRY HAS not been sufficiently considered in itself in either of its languages. The other Celtic regions of the British Isles have long had notable and rich anthologies of their verse in English ; and the present book is welcome as a notable instalment of a Cymric companion for them so far as the vital present-day achievement of Welsh poets writing in English is concerned. While *Life and Letters To-day* may take reasonable pride that so many authors, so many poems included in this independent publication first appeared in its pages.

The landscapes, the characteristic speech-cadences, a friendly pre-occupation with death, and an absence of sentimentality in the love poems—these qualities unite to give a vivid quality to this poetry which is recognizably that of the society and the land from which it has come. And this is in spite of an unneeded quantity of homage to the current fashions of verse-writing which might appear to have been born in an International Express train. Poetry may inform prose as well as verse ; but these categories have proved sufficient, and blank-prose is but an impotent denial that freedom lives by its own discipline—a “ learning madness by degrees and eating our fathers’ hearts ” as one of these poets has it—“ with cuprite crest and petulant feet ” adds another. The feet are very petulant, when present at all. When they “ Prance, vapour-like, on the revolving street ”—in another poet’s testimony—we have perhaps an occasional reason.

This homage is especially beside the mark in a Welsh poet ; for his other language has a secular, subtly attractive metric of its own which ought to affect his English practice and bring to pass a new beauty—as the Gaelic metric has affected the English verse of Dr. Kenneth MacLeod in

Scotland, and of Dr. Douglas Hyde, and later and more inwardly Mr. Austin Clarke, in Ireland. This volume is not without some recognition of the need, but a greater technical accomplishment is required than the *Triads* and the *Englyn* attempted here commanded. I have heard a knowledgable Welshman say that Father Gerard Hopkins' three years' sojourn in Wales and his study of Cymric metres were the foundation of his own innovations and his "sprung rhythm"; and that such poems as *The Sea and the Skylark* and *Pied Beauty* are based on the ordered traditional Welsh alliteration.

In the present volume Mr. Glyn Jones has discovered this secret for himself in the poem *Gull*, with something of Hopkins' success—involving a realization of a quality of incantation native in Cymric verse, with a promise for his future, for all fine poetry has a trance-like origin. The other salient, sure-footed writers in this volume are Ken Etheridge, Emyr Humphries, John Prichard (with a unique intensity of poetry in all he writes, and a vital imagery in its very texture), R. S. Thomas, Dylan Thomas (although he is not fortunately represented, and needs the addition at least of his finest poem "Death shall have no dominion"), Vernon Watkins, Henry Treece (showing, however, to greater advantage in his editor's selection than he does in his own). Almost alongside these, but less fully represented, come four writers of rich promise—Brenda Chamberlain, Constance Davies, Huw Menai; and especially Peter Hellings, but it is to be regretted that his *New Canterbury Tale* is too recent to have been included. It is only justice that the one who leads all these, the captain of this book, should be the one whose work is finished: Alun Lewis, in his tribute to Edward Thomas, shows a kinship with him that this war has completed. *The Sentry* and *The Soldier* show a ripening of Lewis's gift almost identical with the development of Thomas's

work which followed his enlistment in 1915 : the younger poet's tribute to the elder is almost that of a brother in understanding—*The Defeated* might have been an elegy for him. Both were Welshmen, and their Cymric music is one, and precious.

Mr. Keidrich Rhys's editing of this Anthology is good in every way—so good that the readers who are going to trust it for a long time to come are bound to regret that it includes no biographical details regarding its contributors ; nor such an introduction as he might obviously have contributed, charting the terrain he has covered, and placing his poets in relationship to the long story of Welsh poetry.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

SHAKESPEARE AND THE POPULAR DRAMATIC TRADITION. S. L. BETHELL. Introduction by T. S. Eliot. Staples. 10s. 6d.

I HAVE OFTEN thought that the curse in Shakespeare's epitaph may be taken as effective on those who disturb the *body* of his work by seeking to introduce their own changing theories into that casket of his practice, the plays . . . Many critics, seeming otherwise rational, become so possessed that if it be too much to say they take leave of their senses, nevertheless it is clear that words, as they use them, take leave of their conveniently accepted meanings.

Mr. Bethell comes along now to observe that in Shakespeare's plays "there is little influence of one character upon another", thus removing a good deal of the activity of Lady Macbeth, Brutus, Richard III, implying that Malvolio and Benedick moved in a vacuum of free-will and forcing me to express the hope that if the influence of Iago upon Othello was "little", may I never see without a magnifying glass ! Again, "Shakespeare, especially in the comedies, must have written his brilliant dialogue with little thought of why this particular subject should be given to this particular character." It would be as gross an over-

statement as that of which Mr. Bethell is here guilty to say "Then Falstaff and Ford could change speeches?", but it is sober truth to declare that Rosalind's words are as unmistakably hers as are, on a lower level, Portia's. Antonio's and Bassanio's lines are scarcely interchangeable, nor can one deny Viola and Olivia their own tone, even though they speak a common tongue, which is Shakespeare's poetry.

However, Mr. Bethell does not think much of Shakespeare's characterization. "Strip the poetry from a play of Shakespeare, and what is left but a rather haphazard story about a set of vaguely outlined and incredibly stagey characters?" This amounts to tender surprise at finding if you squeeze an orange dry, you have nothing left but pith and skin. Nevertheless, if—to take only minor characters—Shallow, the Nurse, Charmian, Cassio, even Roderigo, are "vaguely outlined", may I be spared what would be the unbearable sharpness of precise definition! It is the more unfortunate that the author's way of thinking leads him to this style of writing, for at moments he contrives to reach points of interest. Unfortunately, they have to be forced into a theory—Shakespeare's characterization is poor, because his characters have to be types; then they can be construed as symbols. Mr. Bethell suggests that many "difficulties" and discrepancies in the presentation of Shakespeare vanish if it is borne in mind that audiences accepted the plays on what he calls planes of "multiconsciousness". Students may find this useful to remember; others will not need to be reminded. However, this "multiconsciousness" is diverted into an attack on "naturalism". This is carried on with a monotonous lack of restraint which is boring to the reader, however much it may suit the author. It is disconcerting on the first page of a book on Shakespeare to find it being said that the action of *A Doll's House* "might take place in a contemporary household", since it implies a private meaning

for "contemporary". With naturalistic playwrights, we are told, "interest in character has become morbid," and "the mere attempt at naturalism is sufficient to rob an art form of its capacity for subtle integration" (no "mere" attempt produces an art form). But Mr. Bethell lets himself be carried away when mentioning "naturalism", which he does on nearly every page. With it, "the last citadel of human dignity fell before the march of mind." We begin to see where we are being taken, for naturalistic drama "developed in a period of religious scepticism and scientific superstition". "Theatrical naturalism is a product of philosophical materialism"; Shakespeare was not naturalistic; ergo—the line of argument is familiar. Just as another critic can trace to his own satisfaction Shakespeare's royalist tendencies, so Mr. Bethell can persuade himself of preoccupation with his own type of Faith. We are told bluntly that "'Time' and 'fortune' both mean Providence". To whom? They don't to me and—if the conjunction does not seem impertinent—I doubt if they did to Shakespeare. He was a poet, he knew what words meant and what words he himself meant to use; if he wrote "time", it is at least as likely (even a critic must admit) that he meant "time" as not.

We continue. Hamlet "waits on God". Possibly—but on much else as well. "Shakespeare's unpsychological treatment of character" (Mr. Bethell has previously observed that *Lear* "is more like a poetic treatise in mystical theology than a portrait by one of our psychological novelists") "including his notoriously uncertain motivation, suggests the evidence of a guiding and controlling Power beyond the human will." But does it? If that motivation is so notoriously uncertain, it surely suggests as well that the guiding and controlling was uncertain? This, for the sake of argument, being granted, it is then made to follow that the Duke in *Measure for*

Measure is "symbolic of some aspects of Deity" and that Prospero "seems to represent divine providence" (from which some of us will take small comfort). Cordelia, who "symbolizes the goal of Lear's purgatorial struggle" (surely this is *very* "psychological"?), uses language (IV, iv, 23) "which directly echoes a saying of Our Lord in St. Luke's Gospel", and the line spoken of her, "*The holy water from her heavenly eyes*" we are told "certainly refers to the holy water of ecclesiastical usage". I do not accept that "certainly". When I read further that that water "being prepared with the addition of salt, furnishes an especially appropriate conceit", I revolt.

In revolting, I would suggest that this peevish and pompous book provides adequate groundwork for anyone wishing to see Titania's fondness for Bottom as a "purgatorial struggle", but I would earnestly remind them and all others with such bees in their bonnets that there was once a custom of removing them before coming into educated society. It had much to commend it.

TREVOR JAMES

A PRISONER IN GERMANY. ROBERT GUERLAIN.

McMillan. 7s. 6d. net.

THE NARRATIVE OF a French soldier captured by the Germans in the Battle of the Somme away back in 1940. Together with some sixty thousand other captives, Guerlain—which presumably is not his real name—spent interminable months within the barbed-wire limits of a huge Stalag Camp somewhere in Germany, until he was finally released under the Vichy Armistice terms.

During the time of his captivity Guerlain has gained deep insight into the mentality and character of his captors, and his book is an objective, almost dispassioned, account of the life of the prisoners of war in Germany. With one or two exceptions there are no hair-raising atrocity incidents in the book. The Germans are harsh and brutal enough,

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

I Believe

The personal philosophies of ALBERT EINSTEIN, E. M. FORSTER, LANCELOT HOGBEN, JULIAN HUXLEY, BERTRAND RUSSELL, THOMAS MANN *and seventeen other contemporaries.*

"It is always interesting to obtain first-hand information concerning the outlook on life of public personalities."—*Church Times*. *Portraits*. 4th impression. 10s. net.

Bugle Blast

A Further Anthology from the Services

Edited by JACK AISTROP *and* REGINALD MOORE

"An anthology which everyone should read; it gives a wide and varied picture of life in the Services in time of war."—*Listener*. 2nd impression. 6s. net.

Bunyan Calling

A Voice from the Seventeenth Century

M. P. WILLCOCKS

"A fascinating book—graphic, full of insight, learned and original . . . will take a high place among the lives of the famous and the great."—*Expository Times*. *Illustrated*. 2nd impression. 12s. 6d. net.

Easy Money

And two other Plays

ALEXANDER OSTROVSKY

"The continued popularity of his plays is undoubtedly due to his vivid character creation, to his humour and command of the stage, and to the provision of fine acting parts for actors."—*Glasgow Herald*. 10s. 6d. net.

40 MUSEUM STREET • LONDON • W.C. 1

but to torture their prisoners would hardly serve their purpose, which is to make them work for their war effort.

Guerlain describes the slow evolution in morale undergone by the French prisoners of war. In the beginning they were a hopeless, dejected lot, paralysed with defeat; but as time wore on they realized that the Germans were desperately in need of man power, and could not do without their prisoners who were made to work on the land and in the factories, in the mines and in road construction. Long before Stalingrad and the heavy bombardment of German industrial centres by the R.A.F., it became apparent to the French prisoners of war that the man power problem would prove the doom of Germany. As far back as 1941 Germany was full of foreign workers: nearly every other worker was a slave . . . an unwilling, but cunning and resourceful slave upon whom the German war effort largely depended. Once the French prisoners of war realized the German plight their morale improved and they began to raise their heads again.

A Prisoner in Germany contains many skilfully handled episodes relating to every aspect of prison camp life: barracks discussions, camp doctors, work parties, escape possibilities, German propaganda, portrayal of S.S. men and others. Altogether a well-written book, which is also informative, instructive, and, in parts, prophetic.

ALFRED PERLÈS

THE BRITISH THEATRE (British Life and Thought Series, no. 14). W. BRIDGES-ADAMS. Published for the British Council by Longmans Green and Co. 1s. THE THEATRE in this country has suffered from too little attention paid to the circumstances of its own merits and too much comparison with that of other countries where conditions differ. This pamphlet, designed mainly for non-British readers, is a miracle of lucid condensation which should enable them to approach our drama for

Wingate's Raiders CHARLES J. ROLO

A brilliant account of Wingate's first expedition into the Burma jungle. The experiences of these "Chindits" made possible the present successful advance towards Mandalay.

Forewords by FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT WAVELL and BRIGADIER-GENERAL HORACE S. SEWELL.

Illustrations and Maps. 8s. 6d. net

The Unconquerable HELEN MACINNES

A novel of Poland under the impact of the Nazi assault, with all the sustained excitement that one expects from the author of *Assignment in Brittany*, etc. 10s. 6d. net

Judith JANET WHITNEY

A novel in the tradition of *Jennifer*, set in Philadelphia in 1792. 10s. 6d. net

HARRAP

To keep abreast with to-day's books, come to the

BOOKSHOP OFF BOND STREET

You can **ALWAYS** see them in profusion here.

Engravers and Diestampers; Exclusive Notepapers; Visiting Cards for Official and Professional use engraved promptly and accurately.

Only a few minutes from Piccadilly.

TRUSLOVE & HANSON

14a CLIFFORD STREET (New Bond Street), W.1.

WANTED MODERN BOOKS

CHILDREN'S ENCYCLOPAEDIA
ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA
(10 Vols.) (14th Edition)

SETS, etc.

HIGH PRICES PAID

ROBERT CHRIS, 8 Cecil Court, LONDON, W.C. 2

TEMPLE BAR 6700

what it is, rather than for what it is not. In achieving this it takes into account the national temper as well as the national history, surveys dramatic performances from the Towneley Cycle and moralities to *Murder in the Cathedral* and modern revues, and sketches succinctly the history of actors, playwrights, playhouses, and setting. The author is good on Shakespeare; so good indeed that it is the more unfortunate he refers to him as a "steady-headed child of the Warwickshire meadows"; he is good, too, on the Restoration writers, the influence of Ibsen, and has space to take in provincial repertory and such bodies as the Marlowe Society. The sixteen illustrations are alone worth the money. They include the Duke's Theatre, Dorset Garden, and Drury Lane in 1808; Ellen Terry as Juliet, Garrick as Abel Drugger in *The Alchemist*; the Hammersmith revival of *The Way of the World* and the Gielgud production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. With the exception of a scene from *St. Joan*, which is muddled, they are well chosen and well reproduced.

H. K. FISHER

THE FACE WITHOUT A FROWN. IRIS LEVESON
GOWER. Muller. 15s.

"THIS IS A book which does not pretend to any historical importance unless as a kindergarten lesson in how easy it is for mountains to be made out of molehills." With these somewhat ambiguous words the author introduces her attempt to "clear up a misunderstanding" about her great-great-grandmother, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. "When editing her daughter's letters with my father (*Hary-O*, John Murray, 1940) I came to know her, and found that most of the time she did not wear the hat and that she was not exclusively occupied in kissing tradesmen, or even other men, for that matter."

The reader who does not recoil from the tone here displayed will find that as the book begins, so it continues,



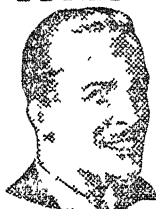
The best TONIC

If you feel, and look, "off colour," suspect delayed bowel action. The toxic effects of retained waste act as a brake on the whole system. Cleanse the interior mechanism with "Medilax" Laxative Pellets and "nature"—the World's best tonic—will be able to restore normal health and vigour unhindered. "Medilax" Laxative Pellets are gently effective, and their "good effect" lasts several days. 1/5 and 3/4 of Chemists, or send a 1d. stamp for helpful Literature and Sample.

SAVORY & MOORE LTD. (Dept. A.L.)
143 New Bond Street, London, W.1



HE HASN'T A "FALSE TEETH COMPLEX"!



He isn't handicapped by dentures which, through gum-shrinkage, chafe the gums, cause pain and embarrassment and prevent the proper mastication of food. Neither is he shamed by stained and dingy false teeth. He has no 'complex'—he uses regularly the safe and efficient denture aids—

KOLYNOS

**DENTURE
POWDER**

for cleaning artificial
teeth. 1/3 per tin.

**DENTURE
FIXATIVE**

makes false teeth fit
firmly. 1/3 & 3/3.
From all chemists.

THE WELSH REVIEW

Editor : Gwyn Jones.

Volume 3, No. 3.

September, 1944.

CONTENTS

All Through the Night (*Story*)
Sacred Ground (*Story*)
The Barren Tree (*Poem*)
W. H. Davies
Sacrifice without Redemption
Plas Ucha (*with woodcuts*)
The Peasant Agriculture of Wales
Book Reviews

Margiad Evans
A. Edward Richards
Wyn Griffith
Caradoc Evans
S. Beryl Jones
John Petts
A. W. Ashby
W. D. Thomas, W. J.
Gruffydd, K. Urwin

etc. etc.

Price 2/6 per copy. Annual subscription 8/10 (including postage)
to be sent to

PENMARK PRESS Ltd., 117 ST. MARY ST., CARDIFF

until it seems a pity that the very title should draw attention to Downman's dictum, "She never wore and seldom met a frown." Those last four words force one to ponder on the forbearance of the Duke, her husband; of Lady Spencer, her mother; of Sheridan and countless others, including her financial advisers and helpers. The consequent sympathy with these, and irritation with the heroine, are clearly not the author's intention, but result from an inept handling of material combined with a gew-gaw style more usually met with in the biographies of film-stars. The book is therefore less a "kindergarten lesson" than an example of the need for one in scholarship and good writing.

TREVOR JAMES

THE MUSK-OX AND OTHER TALES. N. S. LESKOV. Routledge. 8s. 6d.

THE BLURB WRITER asserts that Leskov undoubtedly belongs to the Russian "immortals". This claim, would appear to be based upon Leskov's other writings, for none of the tales included in the present volume can be described as superlatively good, although some do not lack a certain old-world charm.

Leskov writes with equal ease and volubility about the common people and the landed gentry of nineteenth-century Russia. *The Musk-Ox*, which gives the volume its title, is a long short story, excellent as a character study of a queer, mystically-inspired Quasimodo type who kills himself in the end. But the story is somewhat marred by a seemingly extraneous chapter which has no apparent link with the central theme. *Kotin and Platonida* is a rather touching story about an illiterate mouzhik with a great heart. A streak of subtle humour and irony runs through *The Stinger*, an amusing narrative in which the mouzhiks of a princely landowner bitterly complain to their master who lives in France, because the manager of the estate, an

New Zealand

A Working Democracy

WALTER NASH

The ties between Britain and New Zealand are very strong, for, of all the dominions and colonies, she is most like the mother country.

In some circles New Zealand is considered the social and economic laboratory of the world, but little is really known about the lives of the average citizens of that country, and the way they live and work.

Here, then, for the first time, British readers may get a complete picture of modern New Zealand—its men and resources, its history and life, the nation at war, and its hopes for the future.

8s. 6d. net

Milton:

Man & Thinker

DENIS SAURAT

First published in English in 1925, Professor Saurat's was the first full-scale attempt to present Milton's philosophy as a whole. Much of Milton's philosophy exists in Fludd's works, and in the contemporary sect of Mortalists. This part of the original edition is now published for the first time in English.

'He can claim that Englishmen have a clearer picture of Milton as a result of his labours. It shows Milton as a human being, even if not always a lovable one. Witty, religious, full of courage and outspoken, Saurat has many of the qualities which make it easy for him to understand Milton.'—B. IFOR EVANS (*John O'London's Weekly*).

15s. net

DENT

Englishman with English ideas, refuses to have them birched.

The Spirit of Madame de Genlis is remarkable for its portrayal of French-speaking princesses, and the superstitions prevalent among the aristocracy of the epoch. *The Devilchase* is a fantastic tale with a strong mystical basis. *The Alexandrite* chiefly deals with precious and semi-precious stones, notably garnets.

The best one can say about Leskov is that he is a genuine Russian who has inherited all the faults and virtues of "Holy Mother Russia". He is full of sympathy, exuberance, eccentricity, faith, and mysticism, and has a fine sense of humour and great kindliness of heart. He was born in a village near Orel, and died in 1895, at the age of 64. Though he has written a number of political and semi-political novels, his work is almost unknown to the English reader. No doubt, at one time his novels caused a great stir in Russia . . . around 1860.

ALFRED PERLÈS

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

OCTOBER

EDITORIAL

1944

WE HEARD ONCE of "the People's Car". We hear now of "the People's House"—it is one of the depressing things about humanity that it does its best to make history appear predetermined. That is, we know, because people are so loth either to benefit from experience or to recognize reality. But that knowledge explains without removing the fact, and as the future is gradually revealed we realize how familiarly it takes shape.

I refer not to the campaign of 1945, but to those years, whenever they may be, after the war. It is too early yet to particularize of those years, but whatever they provide will be the world in which we have to live. It is the world for which many have been clamouring, but which many also have foretold and even criticized when it first appeared elsewhere. And even the Little Man among us can see now that in many ways it is the world against, and not for, which we have been fighting.

It is an elegant world. "Because of the unexpected demand to go home to produce children, it has been found necessary to ration the number of long-serving Service men from the Middle East who wish to return to Britain with the object of starting families." Therefore, "requests should be accompanied by a certificate that the wife is both fit and willing to bear children" (I quote from the press of 3rd October, 1944). We may well ask not only in which world but in which country we are living. It is not so long since we raised shocked pious eyebrows to heaven when such talk was heard in Nazi Germany.

"No leave, no babies" may do as a slogan, and is not without a certain nostalgia which at any rate implies feeling as well as appetite. One does not ask for Charles Morgan niceties of language in lorryside literature; but what is scribbled in chalk has different standards from what is set up in print, and it seems ominous if professional users of the most expressive language in the world are reduced to employing farming terms in matters to do with human feelings.

It may possibly be held to be as well that they have, for we now know the official view; "priority would be given to women over 35, whose chances of producing children were more limited." The phrase "giving birth" or, for brevity, "bearing," has, I should have thought, done little to fall into desuetude; but officialdom prefers "produce" and, of course, it is to officialdom that we now belong—thanks mainly to those whose sense of interference, making up for their lack of imagination, has been so anxious to have everything planned—which is to say, put under authority.

We are to become a nation of stamp-lickers. We are all to be equal in the eyes of the Lord—the Lord no longer an individual but an institution, with all the evasive properties of that body. As usual, dictated (instead of developed) equality means, not showing people how to look after themselves, but almost making sure that they can't and certainly forcing everyone to be looked after—by the State. "All sorts and conditions of men" are thus to be regimented into one kind—State-controlled. This is the liberation we have so left-handedly made for ourselves.

More years ago than I care to remember—at the beginning of this war—I observed that we "fight for freedom in chains such as never before have we worn". Those fetters are not going to be allowed to drop off; files will be kept

in short supply ; and under the guise of social sub-benefits our chains are to be chromium-plated. Chromium is chosen rather than silver for, " see, what work it saves ! " Here are the two bright words, *work* and *save*, with which which you can dazzle anyone. Particularly those whose eyes are dust-filled by blitz or long hours or bleared by pent weeping on a lonely pillow. What better than no work and all saved ?

One thing only—work of one's choice, and freedom to spend.

That is the crux. But people won't see it. Some because they can't, others because they are not allowed to. No one minds work when choice and conditions are right—and it is not a counsel of perfection to say so. A lazy person may not like work, but a lazy person finds it merely by avoiding what he takes to be work. The rest of us note that the advent of Labour as a party concurred with labour-saving as an ambition. *Laborare est orare*, and *orare* may be taken as being " to live ". But life-saving means to add to life ; labour-saving, to reduce labour. And put what in its place ?

It is here that our progressives display their lamentable unprogressiveness. They concentrate on labour-saving, without concerning themselves with the resultant leisure. In view of their record, it is as well that they don't, for leisure is left free. But when freedom is controlled, leisure will be apt to be forgotten.

We never heard that whine " something to occupy the mind " until work was judged by the clock, not by achievement. To-day it is as familiar as an alert. Consequently, when we read that modern inventions will enable wives to do post-war housework in two hours, we incline at first to think that the rest of the day, judging by present habits, will be devoted to fish and *Mr. Chips* at the cinema. Reflection proves that not to be true. Complete frozen

meals are one of the lures dangled before the labour-weary as time-saver, and life (or labour)-saving in all ways grows more expensive. Many women, we are told, having tasted the paradisal liberty of a factory, will wish to go out to work rather than to stay at home and do their own. Money is still thought to mean independence. A proportion of these workers will, no doubt, be in the factories preparing the frozen meals which they will later buy, being too unwilling or too ignorant to prepare them in the first place in their homes.

The homes, it seems, will not have much room for this. In addition to time-saving and labour-saving, there is now the cult of space-saving. The Little Man, whose century it so regrettably is, must have things his own size. We know what that is in realms of the mind, and in others, space must be saved. The Little Man likes a little house, so that he can have a little car, and because he has nothing to occupy his little mind at home, he likes to go off to other little homes where he can hear the same radio programme that he forgot to listen to at home. Better still, he likes to enclose what were once open spaces with a ring of cafés, coffee-stalls, petrol pumps, and funfairs. Thus, the more mobility he acquires the more everywhere becomes the same—we have seen with evacuees, how affronted they felt if they reached somewhere that wasn't.

The space saved in one way is thus wasted in a larger. We have had this happen with time and with labour. *Saving* has been the slogan, but because people have not thought about spending, they have not known what to do with what they have saved and merely waste time and space.

"Ah," the cry will go up, "but this is where education steps in." It certainly does. Education is the new religion. Or rather, just as politics took for many the place once held by religion, so now education dethrones politics and

is the panacea. All of us know those for whom the cure of every ill is education—usually not better, but more.

I do not tilt against education, only against those who take it up as a war, or peace, cry without seeing that it is merely being for them a substitute for religion, and an emotional outlet, as was the Nazi teaching to those who later became Nazis. If they will admit that their enthusiasm for education is to bring out, or “educate”, what is in people and not to put in, or put over, what is only in themselves—let them go ahead. But few will admit it. Just as at one time people wished to save their souls from sin, now they want to save their minds—trouble. Their excuse for not using what they have is “O, I wasn’t educated”. The true education would enable them to use, and thus live by means of, their minds and energy; not to save them. Indeed, the setting free of their minds from theory and the ability to think their own thoughts might allow them to consider that we are, at best, not alive as human beings for very long at a time and might as well use our consciousness to spend that form of energy we know as life, rather than save it.

But they won’t. They will be so busy sticking stamps, filling forms, queueing at State departments (which will have decided to move but forgotten to say so) that all they will learn will be, not to produce the baby, but to hand it on. And so we may imagine a merry day in this not-so-new world, with the husband returning, not to make a home, but to “start” a family; the wife “producing” and in the intervals going out to work, to be independent. The following over-the-fence conversation may then well take place.

“Coo, still goin’ aht ter work?”

“Not arf. No more human drudgery for me. I’ve ’ad a taste of freedom.”

“Eight hours’ day in the factory, isn’t it?”

"Yus, eight hours' company. Not like here, alone all day—"

"Talking over the fence—"

"It broadens the mind. Me and the other girls discuss films and nail varnish. And then there's the radio."

"What's it play?"

"O, always the same. You get to know it. Kind of friendly like. Takes your mind off things."

"What things?"

"Well, what you're doing. It's 'eaven. You won't catch me taking orders from a man any more."

"The foreman or your husband?"

"Don't be silly. Bert's all right. I can knock 'im abaht and 'e can knock me. It's in the lines, 'four bitters or for worse.' But, coo, I'd never do that to the foreman. I'd lose me job. And that's what keeps me free."

"What of?"

"O, yeow kneow—all this."

And she indicates the ventilated biscuit tin which is her home. Her husband is entering down the chimney, as the plans forgot to put a door. He goes to sleep under the sink, which is arranged to drip, so that he wakes up in the morning in time to take the baby off the boil (thus saving time from washing it and space for a tub). His wife, meanwhile, goes to the oven which, by the simple expedient of having been made not to work, is also the refrigerator. She takes out a Dehydrated Lodger. She pours water on him and mixes to taste—hers is by now for a Not-So-Little Man. She goes off to fun at the factory with him—for of course, having so State-approved an aversion from each other, husband and wife are arranged to work alternating shifts. This ensures that, save for occasional meetings for the production of humanity, they need run no risk of creating personal happiness.

Left alone, the husband takes out his stamp collection—

which is, of course, not his but the State's—and, having gone through a process like the old-fashioned music-hall act of papering a room, he manages to give himself a grant from the tax he deducted from himself out of the bonus granted for the deduction taken by the State for his having filled in on a form against "Occupation" the word "Conscript".

Then, being unable to remember whether it is the night when he is allowed by the State to go out or forced to stay in, he compromises in approved official manner and goes to sleep in the shelter, where he has a nightmare of a land where people were free to go where they liked when they liked, eat what they liked, think, talk, and complain as they liked. He awakes with a start, muttering to himself, "Treason! What have I been dreaming of? It must have been that wicked Nazi Germany!" The process is complete. The little man, like the African hunter, has adopted the skin of the beast he has killed, the better to identify himself with what he once feared.

GENTEEL NISSEN

By BRYHER

IT HAS ALWAYS seemed strange to oppose mass-produced building when not only England but most of the world needs re-housing. We work in a machine age but still sleep in medieval chambers. I went, therefore, to see the pre-fabricated house with enthusiasm, but I returned disappointed.

First of all, there is its appearance. Cheapness need not imply ugliness especially where, as in this case, there is a single design for thousands of houses. I have seen modern architecture in many parts of Europe and the United States, it can be as beautiful as any of the ancient temples or it can be hideous. My preference is for some of the Dutch experiments and the public buildings in Helsinki. I refuse to believe that we have not architects in England who could draw something better than this glorified Nissen hut.

I went over the house with a young soldier on leave and a group of working women. The soldier observed at once that if he came back from work on a rainy day there was no place to hang wet clothes nor to stow his tools. Inside there is a bathroom, kitchen, and a bedroom for the children at the back, in front a sitting room and the main bedroom. We liked the kitchen unit. It has a refrigerator, sink and cooker on one wall and a good, built-in cupboard opposite, with a flap ironing-table. There was only one criticism here. The house is intended for people who would not be able to afford to send their washing to a laundry but there is no place for them to iron sheets or heavy overalls. The women wanted to know the respective advantages of gas and electricity. They were told either could be used but they were not told which was the better. It is a pity that there is this insistence upon an all-gas or all-electric kitchen. Gas is better for refrigeration and most women prefer it for

cooking, because the pots are lighter, there is less risk of a mechanical breakdown, and it is quicker if a little hot water is needed in a hurry, a vital point when the household contains children or elderly people. Electricity comes into its own for lighting, heating, or laundry work. We should learn to use them both, according as they fit our needs.

The bedrooms themselves were good with excellent built-in cupboards, but were badly placed. As an old lady beside me said, "If Tommy feels mischievous there is nothing to prevent him from crawling into the kitchen and turning on the taps." Children would get the smell and possibly smoke of the evening meal being cooked, and if baby cried during the night mother would have to go from her room into the parlour, across the passage and through the kitchen to see what was the matter. An unfair criticism I heard here was, "Oh, I couldn't live with the cupboard"; this was from a woman who evidently considered innovation a synonym for immorality.

All the space was given up to the parlour. It contained the single stove that was supposed to heat both house and hot water. We all felt that the house would be cold and damp, because it is to be built of steel plus some insulating material. Personally I feel that it would be preferable with our wet climate to add a further hundred pounds to the cost of the house and to have two stories. What is the use of spending millions on education and health schemes if the new generation is born with rheumatism? Steel is always damp and the house appeared set on flimsy foundations.

It is an error, I feel, to produce one design and expect it to fit everybody. As my old lady remarked, "This is a perfect house for a widow and two Civils." (The expression referred not to civilians but to Civil Servants.) With some alterations the house would serve an elderly

couple, girls working at a ministry, or even a childless couple with white-collar jobs. It is hopeless for people working in factories. For them it would be wiser to scrap the parlour and offer them a good kitchen with space for drying clothes, and to rearrange the bedrooms so that mother could still keep an eye on the babies whilst she was doing her domestic jobs. Families want warmth and comfort after their work rather than genteel Nissen ; I am sure it is possible to produce better designs than this at no greater cost and that would be a permanent contribution to re-housing.

ABOVE THE FORMIDABLE TOMB

ABOVE THE formidable tomb
No angel will be known
And where Earth's child is buried, there
The void protects its own.

Spring had a smile of hyacinth
In the morning of the year,
Whose transitory innocence
Knows no revival here.

Her innocence could not foresee
That sullen death would give
To an ecstatic enemy
His own prerogative.

Below the lamentable cross
The weeping mother stands,
And love, for which her child had died,
Lies useless in her hands.

R. CROMBIE SAUNDERS

ROMANTICISM AND PRIMITIVE ART

By ALEX COMFORT

IF WE ARE to consider romanticism as an attitude of mind, in which the artist sees humanity as the victim, rather than the master, of his environment, then primitive art is the purest form of romanticism which is available for critical study. At the two extremes of society, the primitive and the civilized that has passed its zenith, the relationship of art to personal insecurity is inescapable. The reaction of creation is always at root a reaction of protest against environment or constraint. It is from this reservoir of constraint that creative activity springs, an inchoate protest at first, differentiated by the passage of time and the growth of organization into science, the activity directed to the modification of the inanimate environment, politics, the reforming of the animate environment, and art, which retains the characters of a pure protest. In this correspondence between the original significance of art as a whole and the significance which I attach to romanticism, I think we may find the origin of a great many of the characteristics of modern primitives who live inside or under an organized society. The art of the savage, pictorial, dramatic, or literary, is not pure verbal protest—it is too ill-differentiated from science and from magic to be such, and unless one looks on the simple desire to make something more permanent than the maker as a protest, most savage art is distinctly purposive—it not only states the unfavourable environment but hopes to make it favourable. The same sort of correspondence exists between the political and merely self-expressive elements which so often co-exist in later primitive art: the element of protest is something more than the howl of the wounded animal, it expresses the dilemma of intelligence—immortal desires and mortal body, will to assertion and economic frustration, love and

rejection—one or more of the insoluble pairs which make up the affective side of the romantic protest. The existence of such pairs arises more or less naturally from the existence of Forethought, the Promethean conflict which figures so widely in European romantic literature. One does not expect the work of civilized primitives, where the concentration is so much on economic and political evils and underdog-ism, to deal with metaphysical insolubles, though these, in a naïve and unanswerable form, are the matter of a high proportion of ballads. The essential feature is that for the moment and for the creator the problem is insoluble—if it is not, then the outlet is rather in solving it by action than in creative expression. A high proportion of primitive art produced within civilized society is the spark generated between the metal of human intelligence and one or another circumstantial grindstone. If this is understood, it simplifies the comprehension of all primitivism in art, savage or civilized.

The zeal shown by left-wingers to stimulate popular art has been largely unproductive. A recent number of the *Studio* devoted to Russian painting gave a very illuminating sidelight upon the results of such attempts—half the work shown was the product of a Moscow school of socialist painters, and about half was peasant art from South Russia. Of the studio-produced work, not one single picture had even the technical competence of the ordinary capitalist commercial advertisement. There was no experiment and no imagination. The socialist realism was bourgeois pictorialism of the muddiest and most melodramatic kind. Beside it the vitality of the peasant art, with its humour, its bizarre stylization of animals and forms, and its traditional assurance was a revelation of the significance of popular art produced by the “people” as a spontaneous reaction to environment rather than as an exercise in duty. I am not abusing Russian painters. The deplorable character of

"popular" poetry and painting worked up by intellectuals as a cultural exercise, a piece of literary or pictorial slumming, is due entirely to a failure to comprehend the circumstances of primitivism. One can understand them only by the examination of primitive work which has artistic merit, and in examining one finds them curiously constant. Given a certain set of circumstances, the grindstone and the iron, the sparks will be generated.

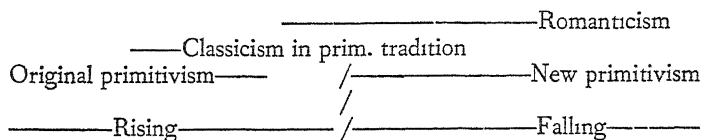
The main circumstances I would postulate are these—tradition, adversity, isolation. The protest is stimulated by adversity, and made vocal by isolation, especially isolation from outside forms of civilized entertainment. Where kitsch culture is available, it will be chosen, and it will swamp expression. In all the places and communities where aesthetically valuable primitive work is produced to-day, these three conditions are fulfilled—among the negroes, the Jews, soldiers, prisoners, railway bums, mining camps—there is adversity, of a kind which no immediate political action of the individual can set right, isolation from opiates and kitsch entertainment by poverty or physical imprisonment, a varying tradition in which the form of the primitive work becomes crystallized. The primitives have seceded or been ejected from the structure of society and its relative security, into ghettos, barracks, huts, casual wards, and there they have set up a way of life of their own, subject to risks and constraints which makes them the indisputable victims of their environment, and the constraint is one which the sympathetic intellectual *can only share if he shares the circumstances which created it*. The Blues or the *cante hondo* are the product of the contact between this grindstone of adversity and a tradition which is either there already or ready-to-hand in a few months: the tradition of the Blues came into existence in a matter of years, its form dictated by the circumstances under which it was sung, and its musical pattern by the availability

of instruments such as cornets and washboards to people who had no others. The grindstone of border ballads or Norwegian or Carpathian folk music was the perpetual presence of death, real to the raiders and warriors, but more emotionally realized by the peasant, whose consciousness of it in literature is always morbidly acute—the iron was the lonely and more or less toil-ridden community, the tradition that which was to hand, shaped by the musical instrument, pipes, Hardanger fiddle, accordion, which happened to be available, and by the visual pattern of the landscape. Not all the art was protestant, at any rate explicitly, except that in the mind of the decorator there is always the unconscious desire for perpetuation which seems to a large degree to underlie the pleasure of creation. I feel that working songs fall readily into this category—modern socialist critics fail, perhaps more in England than in Russia, to recognize the amount of grinding repetition work which is undertaken in primitive communities, but work songs as a whole are hardly a means of grumbling at work. The pleasure of creation is far more a part of wholly primitive communities than of the compulsorily primitive communities which co-exist in the structure of civilization, the bums and the soldiers, the prisoners. It is in these that the protest and a recurrence of the magical idea of poetry are most obvious.

The point at which such submerged work becomes the “class conscious” poetry of the Marxist critics is not easy to define, but in doing so it obviously must move out of the category of mere suffering into that of political action. Where the evils of the environment are predominantly social there is always a tendency for the romantic statement to go on and become a war-cry, but the surprising thing to me is the rarity with which it does so. The soldiers sing “F—— them all”, and the chain gang “I’m tired, Lawd”, but the singing is expression, not sedition. There is a

tendency for the poetry to stop when the active resistance begins. I think it is true that primitive communities and dispossessed individuals do not resort to art when they can resort to action, for obvious reasons.

Again, if one accepts the cyclical idea of society which seems to me to underlie the periodic waves of romanticism and classicism in general literature, the occurrence of romantic primitivism is also cyclical, thus



If the common man only sings when he is hurt, or especially when he is dispossessed, the return to primitivism will start in any society as soon as there is a large enough body of exiles in the structure of that society for a tradition to appear. The bigger the proletariat, the greater the body of romantic popular art, provided that the proletariat is really in the position of having nothing to lose but its chains. When beside its chains it has the ninepenny cinema and the radio soap-opera to lose, its attempts at expression will copy those models. The public of England to-day, hitched to a sham crusade whose imposition they recognize at root, has few sons of protest. For the left to attempt the revival of popular art as long as the dispossessed still have something to lose is futile.

The cycle followed by these small bursts of creative expression inside collapsing or established societies is characteristic. If we regard the literature of a society as a large ornate building, then with the progress of time its lower rooms become unoccupied and allowed to fall into disrepair. The upper rooms are still inhabited, but whole floors are left empty. Into these drift the hoboes and deserters of the neighbourhood, denied access to the upper

rooms, and camp there. In time they build themselves huts inside, but separate from the main building, using what materials are to hand—pieces of the bigger edifice, refuse, broken furniture. In time these huts begin to acquire architectural merit, to become stylized into a set pattern, and later still they and their inhabitants are discovered by the residents of the upper floors, adopted as a curiosity promoted to the status of "Art"—a vogue for slum-style decoration breaks out in the upper rooms, and individual tramps are invited upstairs to entertain the residents. If a public housing scheme is launched, only those who are excluded from a stake in it will construct themselves huts—they prefer, naturally, commercially produced and vulgar houses which are dry, to artistic huts which are uncomfortable. This process of adoption has overtaken the majority of folk music, and "swing" is the latest instance. Mr. Cab Calloway entertained his friends by dancing in a box car to his own mouth music, because he could not afford an accordeon. When the residents upstairs got to hear of it, he was invited up into Tin Pan Alley. The sterility of the bourgeoisie is largely the product of its sense of security, and for popular expression it has to ape the insecure, the people whom it has itself dispossessed. Pastorals, negro spirituals, hillbilly music, ballads, shanties, have all passed through the same process, and it is the element of protest in them which is ironed out in the adoption—

"poor old Joe is dead and gone—
poor old Joe is dead and gone.
Joe he fought at Trafalgar, etc."

from

"Old Joe is dead and gone to hell
We hope so, we say so—
He's dead as a nail in the lamproom door
He won't come hazing us no more . . ."

The residents in the upper rooms, secure observers of the dispossessed, dress themselves up as the tramps and the

peasants, the soldiers are translated into a Goldwyn chorus, the convicts into a comic act, and the translation into commercial kitsch is in itself a translation into classicism by people who, if they are the victims of environment, are unaware of it. The romantic artist as an individual is obliged by his reason to become an enemy of society—the enemies of society are likely to become romantic artists if they produce art at all.

In this lies the fallacy of left-wing criticism. The producers of primitive art under a socialist state, just as under any other state, will be those whom society has dispossessed. The pleas in communist papers for more folk art are the result of a false analysis of the meaning of primitivism—if they bear a result, that result will certainly not be acceptable to the pleaders. Society and war are the chief enemies of the individual, and they are the grindstone on which this popular art will have to be produced, not merely capitalist society, but all society which claims super-individuality. It is only in the disintegrative phase of a socialist, as well as of a capitalist, order that true primitivism will appear, when revolution has given place to authoritarianism. To expect it in Russia now, where the zenith has not been reached, is a fallacious analysis of literary history. The place to seek it will be in disorganized and ravaged Europe where the conditions of its production are present.

SURREALISM AND FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA

By J. F. HENDRY

THE WORK OF Federico Garcia Lorca, introduced into England in the late thirties and intended perhaps as a moral lesson in didacticism, has had quite a different influence. At its greatest, as in "The Poet in New York", of which a full translation is not yet available, it attacks the social structure of the West with the full fury of "romantic" feeling.

To attempt to explain this away, it is maintained that here Lorca was least successful, and employed "surrealist" methods, possibly under the influence of his friend, Dali.

In actual fact, as I shall try to show, Lorca evolved steadily all his life, and his later poems are no more "surrealist" than his earlier ones. They are simply the result, as perhaps the best surrealism is the result, of the impact of "feeling"—that is, of the whole man—upon the society of uncontrolled industrialism. The new is simply informing the old.

The opening of his poem "The Spanish Civil Guard" may serve as an illustration of this:—

"They hide in their heads
A vague astronomy
Of shapeless pistols."

This imagery is daring, and recurs all through his work. Here it is the first declaration of war against the remnants of Spanish feudalism being assembled for the defence of a decadent capitalism—the first step in any fascism.

Then again, there is the "Song of the Flogged Gipsy", written as early as 1921:—

"Later in the night my mother
Will wrap me in silver paper
Civil Guard on your round
Give me a sip of water
Water with fishes and boats."

This, says Arturo Barea, to the miners of the Asturias is stark realism. Whether it is stark realism, social realism or surrealism, is beside the point. It is essentially the same imagery as that of the later poems. Therefore the latter too are stark realism, or social realism, or surrealism, according to the poetic labels of the critic.

In one of these, however, Lorca, plainly goes out of his way to reject the deliberate method of surrealism :—

“What shall I do? Arrange the landscape?
Arrange loves, so that they shall become photos
That they shall become chunks of wood and gushes of blood?
No, no: I denounce,
I denounce the conspiracy
Of these deserted offices
Which transmit no agony . . .”

This is obviously a direct reference to the surrealist technique of photo-montage, frottage, not to mention, perhaps the newer décolletage, which derives from the same psychological attitude as that which produces the files and “offices which transmit no agony . . .”

He denounces the whole conspiracy of silence. He speaks. He is not a surrealist, not a social realist, not an apocalyptic, but a Man. This is inexcusable. Man is not meant to live in his fulness in a world ever more totalitarian. The real totalitarian victory is in the mind, a barren wasteland of human power to exploit. This Lorca attacks :—

“The cobras will hiss in the top stories
And the stinging nettles will break up courtyards and terraces
And the Stock Exchange will be a moss-grown pyramid
And the creepers will come after the rifles . . .”

He takes up his attitude. Are there any other volunteers? The forces of reaction are as ready to silence them in England and America as they were ready in Spain. Even now they are attempting to make Poetry a Trade-Union.

In fact therefore Lorca's poetry—like the most spon-

taneous images in the surrealist movement, say certain work of Eluard—is the result of the impact of an organic way of living upon a society which is based upon the opposite—a mechanist way of living. It is romantic. It is a revolt against reason in so far as reason has become the tool of a social bias. This is why and how in the final issue the reactions of the German Irrational Revolution, and of the Russian, link up and are one with the best forces in England and America. Abuses apart, they all spring simply and essentially from the spirit rising in revolt against unguided industry, for unguided industry is mindless, and mindlessness is nihilism, and nihilism is the Dark Night of the Soul, stopping short at the philosophy of despair implicit in Nietzsche.

Poets who accept the machine uncritically, like Hart Crane and Vladimir Mayakovsky, are apt to fall prey to the chaos and despair involved in any such uncritical acceptance, and the psychological solution suggested may be suicide. Did not Spengler write *The Suicide of the West*? No, not quite, but he would like to, for what is it but his own spiritual suicide writ large?

Lorca, out of what some have been pleased to call "Invertebrate Spain", rebelled not against the machine, but against uncritical acceptance of it. Spain had given him a sense of natural wellbeing, the organic lyricism of health which made his life a song, and he insisted on preserving it at precisely the moment when world *Technics* to use Spengler's diseased term, were thrown into Spain to crush the life out of it. The Civil War was more than an anti-fascist fight: more than a war against reaction. Its roots stretched very far back indeed. It was an assertion of Spanish manhood.

Lorca's work implies the possibility of a society, industrial or no, planned in the interests of life: one in which progress will be not *mechanical*, as it has been—

vide the tyranny of the progress-chaser—but *biological*, as it has never been.

Hence the "Cry to Rome—From the Top of the Chrysler Building", a poem whose title at least, in its awareness of mass-suffering is reminiscent of Mayakovsky, in "150,000,000 Speak Through Me". The masses, says Lorca :—

" Must shout with so loud a voice
That the cities tremble like little girls
And the gaols of oil and music burst open
Because we want our daily bread . . . "

This is an example of what has been called obscure poetry, i.e. poetry with several meanings in one, often called the best type of poetry. Lorca is attempting to free people not only from hunger and external oppression but from their own repressions: the "gaols of oil and music" are not only the real gaols, which at best are clumsy instruments of an outmoded conception of justice, but also the forces which hold imprisoned in the mind, "oil"—the sympathetic generosity, the dispassionate living and perhaps the mystic unctions—which make for social cohesion and dynamic stability—and "music"—the harmony which is the end of such social balance and coherent freedom. The revolution he advocates is thus a double one if necessary, inward and outward, and may be none at all as far as he is concerned, in proportion as it is resolved in his verse.

Technically the influence which is perhaps most persistent in his work is that of his friend Manuel de Falla, who, because he wrote in the purer idiom of music, was more resonantly Spanish. From him Lorca learned much as to the orchestration typical of his verse. One aspect of this lies in the repetition of lines, seen most clearly in the well-known "Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter":—

" At five in the afternoon
It was at five sharp in the afternoon

A boy brought the white sheet
At five in the afternoon . . ."

or again in :—

"I don't want to see it !
Tell the moon to come
For I don't want to see the blood
Of Ignacio on the sand."

and, a Spanish example this time :—

"Lo demàs era muerte y solo muerte
a las cinco de la tarde."

Here we hear the click of the castanets in a Spanish gypsy song. The spontaneity of feeling, pure as the lyricism of music, which he preserved until his death, is music here. The Counterpoint is very similar, and into it fit even the pictorial images, the white sheet and the boy ; the moon, the blood and the sand, containing an implicit drama which appertains to counterpoint because it is presented but not stated.

How much modern imagery owes to Spain ! Much of Lorca is remote and beautiful as the paintings of Chirico and Picasso. The fire it contains is inherent in words and Spain's tumultuous history. It can be no accident that in addition to such a wealth of modern imagery, Spain provided the theatre for the " Civil War " of Fascist mechanics against the people. Tentatively, I suggest this took place because Spain has never been *amenable* to capitalist exploitation, preferring the organic life of sex and spirit. The Bull, now a European symbol, was long a Spanish one, alive in the minds of the Spanish people, to whom the conflict of the link between sex-tension and militarism was not unfamiliar. Thus Lorca's Bullfighter, Ignacio Sancho Mejias, threatens to become a modern myth, as significant as Don Juan, since Spain rose against the brutal instincts of Fascism before England.

Lorca's lyricism, however, became more and more deadened. More and more he had to fight against the

crippling psychic forces of which New York was to him merely the symbol. He struck deep, like a surgeon, or Picasso, with the sword of pitiless social analysis:—

“Mas vale sollozar afilando la navaja
o asesinar a los perros en las alucinantes cacerías
que resistir en la madrugada
los interminables trenes de leche,
los interminables trenes de sangre,
y los trenes de rosas maniatadas
por los comerciantes de perfumes . . .”

(“It is better to weep as you sharpen the knife
or kill the dogs in a hunt that is hallucination
than to suffer in the early morning
the endless milk-trains
the endless blood-trains
and the trains of roses manacled
by manufacturers of perfume . . .”)

Not, you will notice, “asesinar a perros,” which is “to murder dogs”, as some have it—watering down Lorca into imbecility—but “asesinar a *los* perros”, “to kill the dogs”, a very different thing.

Here again the imagery is brilliant and many-sided. The milk-trains in war-time become the blood-trains, ghastly and full of tragedy. They are also, more fancifully perhaps, the blood-vessels in the body, for Spain is a full-blooded country speaking its mind, where a man's blood does not run in fearful grooves or predestined rails, and will not be “railroaded”. The trains of roses manacled assume therefore a dark undertone. They are the flesh and blood condemned to live and die at the will and behest of the tyranny of calculation and of profit.

What is the significance for Europe of this poet? His work had its origin, according to Barea who is about the only critic available, in the “haunting experience of defeat” suffered by Spain in the 1890s, when she lost her overseas empire, and her hopes of a democratic republic. According

to this, it grew out of defeatism apparently, like Russian Communism perhaps, and for this reason our ingenuous native progressives in England have long since started an esoteric cult of defeatism, *per se*, i.e. psychological defeatism.

It is my own opinion that what Barea calls Spanish defeatism was a European phenomenon, and by no means entirely political, nor even spiritual. The fact of the matter is that what Tawney has termed the "sickness of an acquisitive society" is a real sickness with a biological basis and no other. Economic man is an abstraction and always was, but the life of Europe was based upon this abstraction. I hope Drucker is right and we have finished with him. Spain, which has had a more intense joy in life than fish-countries like England, felt the more keenly the physical poverty imposed from outside upon her people. Whispers of "defeatism" with all its implications of moral cowardice and whining treachery—side-issues both of them—are libels upon the Spanish Republic, and upon the poet who wrote:—

"the gaols of oil and music burst open
because we want our daily bread . . ."

Of Franco, the self-appointed guardian louse of the last crumb of bread in a fascist cupboard, we will not speak, as it is impolitic.

Lorca, however, was unpolitical. He had no time. As I have tried to show that his imagery was in a constant state of natural development, and *real*, not "surrealist", so now I should like to maintain that his views on society were not political but biological.

In his poem on the Civil Guard, the horsemen with "skulls of lead" are not only the very concrete oppressors of freedom within the Republic, but equally the repressive forces of the unconscious of the people, which created them. The gypsies on the other hand are the inborn

innocence and natural liberty that must be recovered if the people are to live the natural lives they desire to live.

I know the sneer of Hobbes regarding life in a state of nature, "nasty, brutish and short." Hobbes strangely never seemed to conceive of man as a natural being at all. This is an English fault. The state of nature we mean to-day, is the state of biological health. The economics we mean is the economics of welfare, not of wealth—which is only the means to welfare. Lorca subconsciously understood all this, which is why his work is "non-political".

Europe to-day is surely in the same vertex as Spain, when people "had no urge to hear of their own miseries and sufferings, wrongs or rights, but delighted in discovering themselves, in exploring their feelings, faculties and tastes". This discovery is nothing but the discovery of the natural man, to whom politics and the normal "job" are as ersatz as spam.

It is necessary to say all these things because in England writers who take up the same attitude are liable to be considered in the words of Mr. Spender "anarchists, pacifists and other *outsiders*". I earnestly urge that, cad or no, Lorca was an outsider, and remind Mr. Spender of another phrase of his own: "Poetry which is not written in order to advance any particular set of political opinions may yet be profoundly political." This is very true.

Lorca's implied philosophy of the "natural man", represented in the gypsy and constantly portrayed in his work, was not unknown in England, where its greatest exponent was D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence however could not, or would not, see that natural man *in society*, as did Lorca. Sex to him became a self-sufficient fetish, as it never did to Lorca.

In "Bodas de Sangre" we see more profoundly Lorca's analysis of sex:—

“ Neighbours, with a knife,
With a little knife,
That hardly fills the hand . . .
Hardly fills the hand
And yet cuts keen
Into the frightened flesh,
And there stops, in the place
Where bewildered trembles
The dark root of the cry . . .”

This, says Barea, describes, not the behaviour of people possessed by their blood code, but a ritual in which sex is possession of life and salvation from death. Still more is it a masterly illumination of the identity of sex and murder.

The inhibition of the sexual impulse, therefore, or any form of its betrayal or denial, is conducive to violence and unrest, he says. This is brought out more clearly in another poem when he writes :—

“ There is no one who in giving a kiss
Does not feel the smile of faceless people,
No one who, touching a new-born child
Can forget the motionless skulls of horses.

Because the roses seek in the forehead
A hard landscape of bone
And the hands of men have no other meaning
But to copy the roots underground.”

(Song of the Clear Death.)

The first two lines might be interpreted as simply awareness of the powers of generation, manifesting themselves not only in children, but in the changing masks of the human personality itself. The death is the death of the old man as well as so-called “ real ” death.

In the second two lines this is amplified, and the “ motionless skulls of horses ” link up obviously with the Civil Guard, and so with repression of sex.

Thus it can be seen that Lorca’s sexual teaching is

original and valuable in that he believes the source of violence to lie in its repression and denial. He also maintains that physical death, dealt by the forces of oppression, arises out of refusal of spiritual death involved in love.

It is a pity he did not carry this belief into the larger world represented by the Americas, so that at times that world seems almost to overwhelm him as it did Crane, because the solution is the same.

He stood, not for his own "Spanishness", a ridiculous phrase in a world where every man is a kind of man, but for his manhood in a world that was making humanity impossible. His fight is ours. He is not an oddity any more than Walt Whitman is an American aberration.

The later American poems, however, reveal in their titles a dark and growing morbidity, like the colours in the last pictures of Van Gogh in his madness.

"Landscape of the Mass Which Vomits—Nightfall on Coney Island." "Landscape of the Mass Which Urinates—Nocturne of Battery Square." Yet here too there is an undeniable brilliance, and it is not clear whether the morbidity is Lorca's, or whether it belongs to the Masses. At times indeed he seems to be portraying a society turned *inside out*, one in which the suffering Masses themselves are nightmare manifestations of the unconscious common to us all, and the prisoners only of themselves, moving figures in a dark and vast delusion—for the mad—illusion, for the sane. There is no solution to this "mire and death" but the growing consciousness that is Lorca's "death full of light", no amelioration perhaps but that of firm control of aggression and violence, imposed by technics, and the rationing of technical education itself—because it merely feeds the power complex in modern society.

Otherwise Lorca's own solution will inevitably be tried, the smashing of machines altogether in a revolt world-wide and with no name:—

"... This is the blood that comes, that will come
 Over the roofs and terraces, everywhere,
 To burn the chlorophyll of fair-haired women,
 To groan at the foot of beds, before sleepless basins,
 And to be shattered in a dawn of tobacco and vile brass."
(King of Harlem.)

in the era of the political jitterbug.

It has been said that Lorca all his life fought against death, and that he was absorbed by the idea of death. For this reason it is strange and frightening that he should have seen no way out of the morass but war and the death of cities. The fact is he accepted death, but like Rilke, and the Spaniards, and most individuals, he wanted his own death, not a death imposed on him by the forces of mass-death. He wanted the death that is life. He fled the death that is death.

And he wanted the believers in violence and mass-death everywhere to be brought face to face with the logical result of their fascist creed :—

"I want to see here the men with hard voices
 Those who break horses and harness the rivers
 The men whose skeleton crunches, who sing
 With a mouth full of sun and flint stone.

Here I want to see them. Before this stone
 Before this body with broken reins,
 I want them to show me where there is a way out
 For this captain strapped down by death."

Sex and violence and death seem thus inextricably bound up in his poems, but sex is the symbol of life, the suppression of which brings violence the outcome of which is death, in the ultimate and absolute sense. In between these vast absolutes, are many deaths and many violences. The refusal of spiritual death has to be paid for with violence and physical death, like the refusal of love. "The sky has shores where to avoid life, and certain bodies must not repeat themselves in the dawn." In that final absolute

sense, Lorca does *not* either accept or believe in death. Personal survival here is a meaningless term. He was not concerned over personal survival. He was a man who had learned to die as a man, but his love of life and of his friends stretched out over death and defied it as a final answer to life.

How could he do otherwise? The friends of Death in life, were the Civil Guard: the friends of Death in life were his assassins.

They would not, do not, understand his valedictory :—

“I want to sleep for a while,
For a while, a minute, a century,
But all shall know that I have not died,
That there is a stable of gold on my lips,
That I am the little friend of the West Wind,
That I am the giant shadow of my tears . . .”

WHY IS IT MARIUS? ¹

AT EVENING WHEN a lamp is lit
a child called in a curtain drawn
this soldier (strange word: soldier)
seeing it sees something else again.
Why is it Marius who lights the lamp?

Why is it Marius and the morning comes
the quiet reasonable morning
as though for me (a stranger)
all homely pictures no matter what
opened suddenly on that other one.
Upon an arbor overlooking olive
orange and vine and storied villas
with their dooryard animals.
A man sits there (myself?)
his face shining from the sea's surface
where lies a sailboat far below.
His mind too might sail any place
yet does not go. Here is the bread
the oil the milk the wine,
a freshened altar and the observances.

But now a procession starts
which finally shall bring me home
though its goal is a sacred grove
and mine is a soldier's camp
down this dusty road in the darkness.
Marius—the lamp ¹

WILLIAM JUSTEMA

¹ Pater's hero.

DAFT JENNY

By WILLIAM MONTGOMERIE

DAVID WALKED UP Dalmarnock Street in a very stilted manner, head down, left foot in a space, right foot on a line, left foot in a space, right foot on a line, saying the rhyme over and over to himself under his breath, emphasizing the accents :—

Fraser's sausages are the best,
In your belly they do rest ;
Simpson's sausages are the worst,
In your belly they do burst.

He knew that if he could say the rhyme five times before reaching the draper's shop at the corner he would be lucky, and if he could reach it before the tramcar coming up the road stopped at the tramstop he would be doubly so. The tramcar unluckily stopped just as he reached the factor's office, but he was able to say the lines seven times and a half.

Then he ran round the corner to Fraser's ham-shop in Great Eastern Road. Daft Jenny was already in the shop, waiting patiently three yards away from the counter, holding her infant in a green plaid wrapped also round herself, as if the small sleeping face were another pale bud on the same green stem. The boy gazed at them intently, puzzled by a mother and child without a father.

Three weeks ago he had passed Jenny. She was walking along the pavement near the tenement wall, as if afraid of leaving the shadow of it. There was no infant then, but the same green plaid sheathed her forehead and cheeks, crossed below her chin, and was clutched in both her hidden hands. Underneath her shapeless grey skirt she walked on the outsides of her feet, so worn were the heels of her black boots. David had called after her :

"Jenny ! Jenny ! Jenny !"

But when she turned slowly round and looked at him

the sadness in her dark eyes had made him ashamed, so that when he heard other boys calling after her he repeated to them his mother's words.

"Leave her alone ! She's harmless."

The manager of the shop, a stout man in white overalls, served him first, pulling the heavy round of bacon from the row of hams on the shelf at the back of the window. David liked to watch him unspike the bacon from its handled board, remove the enamelled price ticket and the label with "Delicious" in black letters ; to listen to the wheep-wheep of the broad hamknife on the whetting steel hanging, when not in use, from the man's belt, and the hiss of its edge keenly cutting the thin slices that fell one by one on the greaseproof paper. The man's eyes rested once or twice on Daft Jenny. He lifted a hambone from the counter, wrapped it up in paper, and laid it without a word beside the quarter pound of funeral ham his girl assistant was preparing for Jenny. The girl nodded slightly, and placed the two packages together on the front of the counter.

Then she walked round the end of the counter and raised the edge of the plaid from the infant's forehead. The other girl followed her, and the two of them peered together at the sleeping child.

"I wonder where you come from ?" said the second girl. It was a rhetorical question, and she expected no answer.

"Ah dinny ken," said Daft Jenny.

The manager began to cough, and coughed so long that he recovered only when Jenny had put out her white hand with the blue veins and clutched the two packages from the girl who had picked them off the counter, withdrawn her hand under the plaid like a small carnivorous animal retreating into its burrow, and left the shop.

David saw that the man's face was wet with tears, yet he was laughing.

"Ah dinny ken," said the man.

"It's a crying shame," said the girl who had wrapped up Jenny's ham, and she was smiling.

"I'm crying," said the manager, wiping his eyes with his wrist, for his fingers were greasy from the bacon slices he arranged neatly on the paper. Then he pushed the paper package across the counter, and dropped David's half-crown into the till.

"He should get ten years," said the other girl.

"He should be made to marry her," said the first one.

"A life sentence," said the manager, spiking the boiled bacon on its board, and sticking on a new word "Super-fine" instead of the one he had taken off.

"Up ye go!" he said, heaving the heavy board up to the gap in the row of hams in the window.

"I wonder who he is," said one girl, as if she were trying to identify the accused in a line of men stretching from the door of the shop to the end counter.

"Ah dinny ken," said the manager, emphasizing the first word. Then he looked at David who was still standing there.

"What do you want, sonny?" The three of them looked at the boy, as if he had overheard something he shouldn't have heard.

"You've forgotten my change," said David.

"So I have," said the man, finding it on the edge of the counter.

David told the story to nobody, but turned it over and over in his mind. He felt that he had learned something new about adult life, but was not quite sure how much.

"Daft Jenny's got a baby," said his mother to his father a few days later, and his father said the same thing as the girl in Fraser's.

"I wonder who he is."

He said it in the same tone as the girl in the hamshop,

and very slowly, as if he were looking into his mind at all the men in the district.

"I can't understand some men," said his mother, and then his father looked at his mother, and nodded slightly in David's direction. They changed the subject.

This knowledge that there were things they did not tell him, nor even discuss in his presence, planted in the boy's mind one very curious illusion which, because of the limitation of his experience, he could neither prove nor disprove.

"Suppose my father and mother are German spies. They wouldn't tell me. Suppose my father is a German spy. Maybe he wouldn't tell even my mother."

He couldn't ask them, because they would either refuse to tell him or, if they were not German spies, they would only laugh at his silly notions. The boy could think of no way out of the suspicion, except by watching them very carefully in case they would give themselves away by some chance remark, but they never did.

When David met Jenny next she had no infant, and no green plaid. Her arms were folded under her breast as if she did not know what else to do with them. She was walking along close to the tenement wall, and anyone looking out from behind the lace curtains of the ground-floor windows of the tenements would not have seen her eyes, nor did she look into the face of anyone who passed. Perhaps her head was a little more bowed than usual as though she were looking for something on the ground or at the bottom of her own mind.

David's mother heard in the grocer's that detectives had called at Jenny's home and questioned her about her baby, but all she had answered had been :

"Ah dinny ken."

"It wiz better deed onywey," was the general verdict.

Daft Rab brought the news that they were dragging

the river, "wi' boats, an' ropes, an' a'thing." He stopped everyone he knew, or half-recognized, and told them in broken phrases that were always difficult to understand. David heard the rumour, and went down in the evening to the River Clyde, past the place where the gambling school met on the coup near the fever hospital. There was a boat he had never seen before, moored across the river to a new post. He looked into the water as if he might see something where the police had failed.

A young man, wearing a brown muffler, came along the path at the top of the high riverbank, carrying a young white dog. He laid it down on the greasy grass very carefully, and when David looked at the animal he saw that its hind legs were broken. Then the man took a brick from under his oxtar, and a hank of string from a pocket of his blue serge suit, tied the string twice round the brick with a firm knot, and twice round the dog's neck. He looked at David and said :

"Ah canny dae onythin' else wi' him. Can ah?" He stroked the animal's head, and it licked his hand. Very gently he picked up the dog and the brick together, and threw them into the air. They swung round each other as they rose, and fell to strike the water together. The brick sank first and dragged the white terrier head first to the bottom, where it swayed like a pale green weed anchored to the ground, its broken hind legs pointing upward to the light and air, its forefeet pawing blindly down.

THE PANTOMIME

By MONICA STIRLING

WHENEVER THE WEATHER was fine the patients were wheeled into the open ; all except two of them. These were Guy Doumerge, a young French pilot, and Milan Curcin, a middle-aged Yugoslav sailor. Both were so badly wounded that it was apparent even to themselves that their deaths were likely to take place soon.

Although they had met for the first time in hospital the two men had already become friends rather than acquaintances, each preferring the other to his alternative neighbour and finding in the inadequately sunlit afternoons when they had the ward to themselves an opportunity to talk with an intimacy encouraged by the acknowledged immanence of death.

It was sympathy of temperament rather than community of interests that made a bond between them, for their pre-war experiences had little similarity.

Guy's life had until the war been of orderliness and industry all compact, and his belief in the value of these two qualities was so intrinsic a part of his nature that despite the events of the past four years he still had a virtuous and gently nurtured child's horrified disbelief in the injustice and violence now encompassing him : he often felt either that there must be some reasonable explanation that had hitherto escaped him or that he would presently wake to find the war had been a dream.

His father, a professional soldier, had been killed in 1918, and his mother had spent the years that followed trying to prevent her two children sensing that the texture of their life was poorer than it ought to have been. The elder child, Emmanuele, had been educated at the famous school for the daughters of holders of the Legion d'Honneur ; the younger, Guy, at the Lycée Louis-le

Grand. Both had, by anxious striving, done well at school, but when the 1939 war broke out Emmanuele, then studying science under Madame Curie's elder daughter, became a nurse and Guy, regretfully but with no doubts as to his duty, left the Sorbonne for the army; and, fortunately for their peace of mind, this incapacity to doubt the nature of their duty, to which their mother's account of their father's life and death had committed them, survived even defeat; and in the autumn of 1940 they both set out to be finished abroad.

Like many of their contemporaries they found the moving accidents by flood and field which they suffered so unlike anything they had been taught to expect that after they had been in England a few weeks they almost ceased to believe in them.

But when, soon after this, Emmanuele was killed in an air raid on London, it seemed to Guy that his private life could scarcely become grimmer. He continued to apply himself to his work with the steady devotion now habitual to him, but his youthful taste for its adventurous element completely left him.

Despite his extreme lack of expansiveness Guy was popular with his comrades. They had for him the regard appropriate to a mascot: three times he had his aeroplane badly mauled but brought it safely home, his crew unharmed. On the first occasion he broke his ankle getting out of the aeroplane; on the second his left arm was slightly burnt; on the third, he sustained half a dozen bruises. But in the autumn of 1943, he was shot down with more disastrous results, which was why he now lay, weak but clear headed, with one leg amputated, the other in an appalling condition, and both arms severely burnt.

Having shown remarkable powers of physical endurance, he was admired by everyone in the hospital; but as he was just too young for suffering to have induced the

reassumption of childishness that made so many of the sick men endearing, the nurses found it difficult to joke with him in the traditional manner. The only person who fully understood the French boy's state of mind was the Yugoslav sailor beside him. For he, having had a beneficially adventurous life, perceived Guy to be struggling not only with physical pain but with intense disappointment at the emptiness of the short life he was about to leave. In consequence he allowed the boy to persuade him to tell again and again the story of his own remarkable life.

Born a Slav subject of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Milan had had little real choice as to his profession. Like most of the more intellectual of his compatriots he had entered the church, hoping to find in its nominal internationalism some alleviation of the alien nationalism encompassing him. But as this hope was unconscious, and his natural piety strong, he had been able to fulfill his priestly functions with sincerity as well as efficiency.

But it was when the Empire disintegrated that his first great moment occurred—and with a boy's excitement Milan told Guy of how one day a gypsy had run into his village presbytery saying "The Emperor has gone"; of how, as if by magic, the five thousand souls who made up the population of the village sensed what was happening and, committing themselves to anarchy, began to loot; of how they rushed, fluid and inexorable as the sea, from shop to house and from house to shop; of how they would have wrecked the presbytery had not Milan happened to own a machine gun which he had bought for a piece of bread from a party of deserters; and of how with this gun, three rounds of ammunition, and the help of two boys even younger than himself—Slav soldiers still wearing tattered Austrian uniforms—Milan had encircled his village with peace. Setting up their gun in the market place, Milan and his two friends fired the first round of ammunition. Rat

tat tat tat. Unaware that this sound had only symbolic value the peasants ceased looting and returned to their homes. Scarcely had they done so when another gypsy brought news that Imperial troops were advancing on the village. Firing the second round of ammunition, Milan answered firmly: "Tell them we are waiting for them." The Imperial troops did not come. And for six months the young priest kept his village contentedly free from bloodshed—until the happy day when the first Yugoslav government came into being and was able to tend its own. "By this time," said Milan, with a naïve pride extremely touching in so good and wise a man, "I had increased my army. We were no longer three. We were twenty-four."

But though every detail of Milan's improbable sounding adventures gave Guy intense vicarious pleasure, it was the Yugoslav's account of his paradisiacal student days in Paris that made the boy pale, tremble, and at last turn away to hide his tears.

Knowing that one of the first needs of grief is not to be soothed, but to be recognized as legitimate, Milan said quickly:

"I know, little one. I know. There is so much you have missed and will never have that there is nothing an older one can say: nothing that would not be pretentious. But consolation apart—in this war at least you have done bravely, do you not think? No one could have expected more of one life."

"Thank you," stammered Guy. "Perhaps not. Not more. But something *different*. I expected something different—of myself, I mean. You see . . . you see . . . when you talk . . . when *you* talk . . . I can *see* you—*younger* than I am now, standing in the market place absurd and gallant with your one gun and your two boys—but more than absurd and gallant. Much more. Because

you were a priest fulfilling his function. You did not let events deflect you from your vocation: you had five thousand individuals in your charge—and you did not let life intimidate you into choosing death. And now though you are dying before you are old you can look back—” Guy’s eyes began to glitter feverishly—“you can look back and say to yourself that whatever else there has been in your life of disappointment there was a moment when you had five thousand individuals in your charge and it was as if you went to each one and made him a present of his future. And since you are a priest that means that you can feel there was, at least, *one* moment when you fulfilled your destiny.”

It was so apparent that Guy was deriving needed sustenance from the thought that someone of his acquaintance had known consummation that Milan refrained from telling the boy that he had for years bitterly regretted his precipitate choice of profession, for years been bitterly afflicted by his longing to marry a Serbian girl whom he had met too late. Instead he nodded gravely and said:

“But you, little one—did you not for a moment fulfil your destiny when you escaped to fight?”

“No,” said Guy, softly but firmly. “Oh no. And I am not being modest when I say that. Only truthful. I did what was right, yes. But it was—as it were, outside my part. Because I wasn’t made for great adventures as you were, but for a modest existence: to do my job, to fulfill my responsibilities towards my family, and to marry a girl I loved and who loved me, and have children. That above all. Above all. I have never had casual love affairs. Because I wanted when I married to love once and for all. And now I am dying. And I have never even glimpsed my destiny, let alone fulfilled it.

“And—you regret the ‘casual love affairs’ you might have had?”

"Yes . . . no . . . oh I don't know—only that I regret love."

"Now then!" called the kind, undiffident voice of the youngest nurse. "What's all this? You two are as bad as a couple of old women for gossiping. You mustn't tire yourselves out, you know. You don't want to miss the pantomime, do you?"

Neither Guy nor Milan knew the meaning of the word pantomime, so the nurse had to explain it, which she did with many exclamations of disbelief at their not knowing what everyone else in the hospital had known for weeks: that to-morrow afternoon some actors and actresses from a near-by repertory theatre were coming to perform their Christmas play to the wounded.

"But that is most kind," said Milan with enthusiasm. "And most right—that we should be initiated into the folklore of our allies."

"That's right," said the nurse, who did not know what he was talking about, but being unaware of her ignorance was untroubled by it. "That's right. We've fixed up a sort of platform in the lecture room. So you'll both be able to go—if you behave yourselves and sleep well to-night." She was a good-hearted girl, and thought that it gave wounded men courage if one pretended that eating and sleeping, living and dying, were alike processes under their own control. And in many cases she was right.

As soon as the men had been taken into the lecture room they began to create an atmosphere of disproportionate excitement like that often found at school plays. The actors had arrived more than an hour ago. They were for the most part very young, and the classically student-like air of their bright, eccentric clothes, the absorption in their tasks that one and all displayed, and the remoteness of these tasks from the recent experiences of the attendant soldiers, many of whom were, and knew themselves to be, engaged

in a doomed struggle with death—all this reminded Milan of the arrival of the players in Hamlet. Every now and again a sound of hammering came from behind the improvised curtain, and once or twice a long-legged girl in green trousers came into the auditorium and began to monkey with lamps and wires.

At last a heavy silence fell. Then from a gramophone behind the stage came the sound of Tchaikowsky's Sleeping Beauty Waltz.

The curtains drew jerkily apart, and a very young girl dressed in white tulle and rather badly made-up, waved a papier maché wand and announced that she was the Fairy Queen and was about to reveal the true story of the Sleeping Beauty.

Few of the men in that audience had visited a theatre for months ; many had never done so ; and as the grave and lovely fairy story was unfolded, with its traditional complement of slapstick comedy, they gradually forgot the crudeness of much of the performance and saw only the ingenuity and wish to please of the young artists ; until at last the reactions of everyone in the hall were dovetailed in the beautiful pattern of giving and receiving pleasure.

In the case of Guy and Milan this pleasure was increased by the admixture of exoticism the entertainment had for them and Guy, who was extremely fond of the theatre, was in a peculiarly receptive mood when the moment came for the Sleeping Beauty's rescuer to make his first appearance.

Being ignorant of the traditions of English pantomime, Guy was taken completely by surprise when, a fanfare of trumpets having announced the prince's presence, the black velvet curtains at the back of the stage parted and revealed a shaft of light in which stood, very still, a young girl who seemed to him the embodied vision of the brightest dream which like a dawn heralds the day of life.

She was very slender and long-legged—so much so

that Guy's English neighbour hissed appreciatively through a broken tooth: "Gor blimey, 'er legs come out of 'er neck they do an' all"—and her white satin suit and the way in which her short black hair curled all over her head gave her the look of a Renaissance page boy. But what charmed Guy most was the mingled simplicity and diffidence with which she eliminated both sentimentality and facetiousness from her part, substituting a lyrical solemnity entirely appropriate to a child's conception of a fairy prince.

Towards the end of the play the Dame came down to the footlights and with the exquisite irrelevance that is an integral part of pantomimes asked the audience to join in the chorus of *Every Nice Girl Loves a Sailor*. To Milan there was something very moving in the spectacle of young wounded men singing with innocent lustiness a song so naïvely evocative of the sweet, crude pleasures for which many of them were now permanently unfitted. Noticing that Guy was not singing, and wondering if the boy shared his emotion, Milan tried to give him a smile of encouragement and, as if he had been waiting for this signal, Guy jerked his head further round and whispered:

"Please—please ask Nurse if *She* could come and speak to us afterwards."

"She?" Milan raised the black shrubs he called his eyebrows. "Which she?"

Which she? Which she! Once again Guy felt as he had used to do when young: scarcely able to believe in the imbecility around him—imbecility whose gratuitous yet wilful nature had once been as clear to him as the no longer apparent fact that black was black and white white, and two rights don't make a wrong. And because he was back in this young, intolerant world his eyes became brighter and his voice clearer and there was a note of happiness in his exasperated:

"Which she? Why, you sacred species of imbecile—which she do you suppose? The Prince—of course."

"Ah ha. The little one with the so delicate face? Now myself I prefer the Princess. A delightful young person. And so blonde."

So blonde! Guy looked at his friend coldly, and as he did so there came into his mind the priest who had prepared him for his first communion: a foolish man addicted to saying, "And now my young friend—if you will permit me to descend for a moment from the sublime to the ridiculous." So blonde indeed!

"Really?" murmured Guy haughtily. Then, less haughtily, "You will ask, Milan?"

"I will ask," said Milan, smiling with his lips.

Although the Yugoslav was a favourite with the nurse, she looked doubtful when he made his request and tried to put him off by saying that the actors must have tea before catching their train. This was not the real reason for her hesitation: a pure hearted, phlegmatic girl who after four years of war still considered all diseases to be entirely physical, she divided the world into two classes: patients and visitors—and thought the latter class a pity.

"Oh come, Nurse," said Milan. "Please. There's a dear soul. I knew Miss Litton in Yugoslavia. Her family were friends of mine. And it is not often that I have a chance to meet someone from my country."

"W—ell . . ." began the nurse; then, remembering that Milan was a very religious man and might therefore be supposed unable to tell a lie (she herself was staunch Unitarian and never lied on purpose), she gave a small sigh and went to find the actress.

Nora Litton showed no surprise at the nurse's story, partly because she was not in the habit of showing her feelings except when acting, and partly because the war

had introduced such chaos into her private life that her capacity for surprise was almost exhausted.

"Do you want me to come at once? Or shall I get changed? I shan't be a minute."

"Oh I should come as you are. He'll like to see your costume," said the nurse, who had been surprised to find the white satin and tinsel very tawdry looking near to.

"How good of you to come, Mademoiselle," said Milan, when the nurse at last brought Nora to his bedside. "How most good." Then, moving his eyebrows up and down, "And now what about a cup of your national drink? Please nurse! Just one cup. For Miss Litton. No, no. You're not to say 'Suppose'"—he mimicked the nurse with skill—"Suppose *everyone* were to ask for tea at all hours.' Everyone wouldn't. Come, nurse. Or I shall think you are in the pay of Hitler."

This being the regulation tone for the cajoling of hospital staff by military patients, the nurse at once smiled and left them.

After she had gone no one spoke for a moment. Then Nora awkwardly shifted her inconsiderable weight from one foot to the other, gave a shy quick smile, and said severely:

"I've never been to Yugoslavia, you know."

"Oh. That is a pity." Milan made a grimace that would have been helpful to Walt Disney. "You must come after the war."

So remote and unreal did After The War seem to both of them that neither felt it necessary to qualify the apparently inane optimism of this remark. Instead:

"I should like to," said Nora in the voice of a polite child. "Very much."

There was another pause.

Then Nora gave a little tug at her unwrinkled tights, ran the tip of her tongue over her pale delicate lips, and said, "Well . . . well . . ."

"You will please forgive me," said Milan. "It was the only way to get nurse to agree to fetch you. And my young friend here wished so much to make your acquaintance. Guy Goumerge is his name. And he is a French aviator."

"Oh . . ." she turned from the benevolently wild-looking Slav to the pale, composed French boy. "Oh . . ." then, the shyness that always overcame her when she found herself with non-stage people suddenly making it impossible for her to shake hands in a conventional way, she whispered, "hul-lo."

Her childishness gave Guy confidence, and a little colour came into his cheeks as he laughed and said "hul-lo."

She was older than he had supposed when he saw her on the stage; and though her face was as lovely near to, it was very pale, and fatigue had drawn little lines as fine as creases in tissue paper around her large grey eyes and small nervous mouth. But the elusive, childlike quality that had entranced him on the stage was still pronounced, and Guy's voice faltered as he said, mouthing the foreign words as he had not done since his first months in England,

"I . . . I saw you act just now, Mademoiselle."

"Did you?"

"Yes. I thought you were beautiful."

"Thank you. I . . . it's a good version really, don't you think?"

"Pardon?"

"A good version of *The Sleeping Beauty*."

"Ah. Yes. Indeed, yes."

They stared at each other.

Since he came to England the French boy had known only one way to prevent his longing for his home undermining his capacity for daily life: not to think of home. But now, in the presence of this shy, weary little foreign

actress with whom he had fallen passionately in love, his whole being was suffused with nostalgia. Forgetting that it was unlikely he would ever have met her in France he thought of the joy he would have known in showing her Paris and the lovely country around the village on the Loire where he and his mother, now starving, and his sister, now dead, had once been used to spend their sweetly tranquil summer holidays; he thought of the affection his mother and sister would have felt for his wife—and as the beautiful word wife ran along the edge of his thought like flame along a sheet of paper he became possessed by the conviction that Nora must know his feelings, and share them. And he began to tremble. Until suddenly a bell, clanging down a distant corridor, reminded him that he was in a foreign hospital, that he was dying, that he was a sick looking boy who would never be a healthy looking man, and that tremble though he might, no woman would ever tremble beneath his gaze unless from compassion. And his eyes filled with tears and he began to stutter. Then, seeing the heavy gold ring upon her finger.

“But—you are married?”

She shook her head. “I was.”

“Oh.” Quickly recognizing the need for sympathy, it was Milan who spoke. “I am so sorry. The war?”

She nodded. Then: “No. I mean, yes. In a way.” Then she looked at them as if she had suddenly remembered something disturbing of which she ought to have thought before: “He was a German.”

“My dear.” Milan held out his sound hand. “He died in Germany?”

“No. In the Isle of Man. Of pneumonia. In 1940. He was a refugee.” Seeing the expression on Guy’s face, she went close to him, took his hand, and said quietly,

“My mother was French.”

“Was she? Was she? Suddenly his awareness of life

slipping away overcame his awareness of Milan's presence, and Guy clutched her thin hand and whispered :

" I love you. Oh, I love you. I mean," painfully, " I could have loved you."

" I know." And her eyes filled with tears, and she bent and kissed him on the lips. " I could have loved you too."

And as Nora and Guy gazed at each other, and Milan gazed at Nora, the eyes of all three saw something that did not exist. For the English girl was gazing not at Guy but at the dead German she had loved : not at Guy, but at a foreigner whose dying hour was lonely ; and the Yugoslav was gazing not at Nora but at the Serbian girl he might have loved years ago : not at Nora, but at his defeated past ; and the French boy was gazing not at Nora but at the girl he might have loved years hence : not at Nora, but at his murdered future, at the destiny of which he was not after all to take his leave without catching a glimpse.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

SING HIGH! SING LOW! OSBERT SITWELL.

Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

A LETTER TO MY SON. Sir OSBERT SITWELL. Home and Van Thal. 3s. 6d.

FOR THE SAKE of the author, I could wish that a better than myself were reviewing these books; but my pleasure in them is such that it would be penance not to give voice to my gratitude. When the war is over, few writers will be found to have done more to sustain and stimulate us than Sir Osbert, and this by the continued exercise of a spirit and style which in neither case is it too much to call noble.

In *A Letter To My Son* he addresses the imaginary recipient primarily on his future as an artist, but this entails outlining, with wit as well as with pitying wisdom, the world in which he will find himself. Sir Osbert is not content to leave it at that, but derives it as well from present conditions, in turn evolved from that previous "Great Interruption"—"the First War to End Wars." In consequence, and owing to the lithe quality of his mind, there is hardly a problem that besets us that is not succinctly analysed and, short as the book is, hardly a question of to-day that is not lucidly answered, in a way that should put to shame the majority of those prolific professional political writers who attempt to hide their own muddledness by confusing the public, with involved obscuring of the obvious. On every page of *A Letter To My Son* there is enlightenment. There are also great love, understanding, and a courage whose strength is its unostentatious determination. There will be many in the future, as there are now, to benefit from this inspiring work—not only in the good it will do to themselves, but in the example it is of an expression of faith and confidence from one of the few great minds now among us—a mind bent, it may be

observed, on making life not more difficult but easier for others.

Several of the subjects he treats of in the *Letter* recur in the volume of essays, *Sing High! Sing Low!* Here the author is, on the whole, less grave in mood, and to open this book is like waking in dark winter on to one of those spring mornings which already seem to have summer in them. He leads us bewitchingly, in unmatched prose, through the orchards of Prince Pu-Ru, at a garden party given in April, 1934, to observe the crab-apple trees in bloom. From this to Guatemala (of which my readers will recognize *Still Life; Box and Bottle*) or to a picnic "on a waterless rock in the very middle of the Atlantic", which was as "a bourne, indeed, from which, very nearly no traveller returned"; to Badminton, and thence to Italy, following the art-treasures of the third Duke of Beaufort, and the strange career of Mr. Philips—a masterpiece of detection in unusual setting. You may, for the riches of the book are great, "see" the art of Rowlandson and of Tchelitchew; be asked, or beguiled, to consider, in *The Eye Within The Ear*, poets and painters as counterparts, and listen to a brilliant plea for saving the old school tie or a tirade against that *Conspiracy of Dwarfs* which in nearly all matters of public furnishing, compels those of normal height to spend a large part of their lives doubled up; and, from the essay on London, you may return to our capital, knowing and loving it better for the picture of it which Sir Osbert has ranged beside those earlier left us by other great writers. Here, too, there echoes in our ears, as in the *Letter*, the wisdom we wait for and which few others give; "we should not plan to see too much of the sky or it will fall on us in rain and snow and soot . . . if you open up a vista of St. Paul's what you will see will not be St. Paul's but more fog and, perhaps, a policeman."

ROBERT HERRING

THE HOUSE IN THE PARK. F. D. OMMANNEY.

Longmans. 10s. 6d.

DR. OMMANNEY, AUTHOR of *North Cape and South Latitude*, now voyages in search of the spiritual landmarks of suburbia. For services to natural history his great grandfather, Richard Owen, received life tenure of a house overlooking Richmond round pond. Its personality and Victorian presences provide the still centre in this sensitive survey of a boyhood bordering on two worlds.

Ommanney was born into a world of gentlefolk, whose influence, caste, and professional privilege were already obsolescent, but whose class-consciousness remained as exclusive as their tastes were expensive. He grew up into a world of "ungentlemanly competition", where knowing the right people and always doing the thing no longer assured entry to a prosperous career. The deterioration of society, which his elders diagnosed in consequence, the author is now inclined to echo, seeing "a decline of values everywhere since they were pushed off their pedestals".

This atavistic regard for his family tradition is offset by Ommanney's critical distaste for his school days. The bulk of the book concerns his apathy, loneliness, and unrelieved mediocrity at private, prep, and public schools up to the end of last war. He appears to have contrived wonderfully well to be idle without sports, but without Dr. Johnson's excuse. Masters and boys figure more often as tormentors than as mentors and friends. Equally unattracted by cricket, chapel, or the evolution of an officer cadet, he finds early solace in literature. Writing is to become chief expression of that inward happiness, which despite so many growing pains subtly pervades the book.

Dr. Ommanney's style is attuned to his theme. The felling of a great Scots fir, when the house in the park reverts to Crown ownership, has for him the poignancy

of the passing of the old order. With it, he writes, "a hundred years of patient growth, a miracle of grace and beauty, a benediction of lovely scents and solemn melodies has been laid low".

ALAN WALBANK

THE SPINNERS OF SILK. HSIAO CH'EN. Allen and Unwin. 6s.

HSIAO CH'EN'S STORIES illustrate a development in the art of the short piece which will, I believe, come to exercise a growing influence on writers of at least the Asiatic countries. For the tradition they came from has, already in the course of the last quarter of a century, developed certain characteristics which are of lasting value. Apparently born out of a revolt against classical literature, the short story in the modern vernacular *Pai Hwa* consciously or unconsciously retains the rhythm of the classical poem and its winged realism: a number of matter of fact, earthy statements are suddenly lifted by a metaphor, illuminated, as it were, by a lightning stroke, so that the whole world glows in spite of its sordidness and filth. The earthiness of the contemporary Chinese story may derive from the old folk novel to which men like Lu Hsun turned for inspiration after the Revolution of 1911, but it seems that the moulds of classical poetry have survived. The story, the primary literary form of the new China, aspires to be a poem.

The Indians, through Tagore, have helped the Chinese writers towards this approximation; and, not unnaturally, the Chinese writers are exercising a tremendous influence on the young Indians in return. I do not want to over-emphasize these influences, but I want to indicate that the short story form is tending to become the primary art form of Asia to-day. As such, except in Mrs. Woolf's sketches, the contemporary Asiatic story has few parallels in the West. But the publication of translations from

"THINGS PAST" by MICHAEL SADLEIR 10/- net

Book Soc News "In this excellent miscellany the balance between the biography and the critical comment is easily maintained, and he is everywhere clear and effectual. A distinguished little book."

2nd edition.

"CAROLINE FOX" by WILSON HARRIS 15/- net

The Journal of Caroline Fox was published more than sixty years ago, when two editions appeared

Mr Harris has not edited a straight reprint of the Journal but, using it as raw material, has written a biography of Caroline, putting her in her family background and describing her friendships with various eminent people

"PLAYS FOR PLAIN PEOPLE" by JAMES BRIDIE 10/- net

This new volume in the Library Edition of the works of this outstanding playwright contains *Lancelot*, *Holy Isle*, *Mr Bolfray*, *Jonah and the Whale* (3rd version), *The Sign of the Prophet Jonah*, and *The Dragon and the Dove*.

"TWO MIRRORS" by PETER DE POLNAY 10/- net

The background is Patagonia, with its snow-covered mountains, its boulder-strewn plains, its vast flocks of sheep. There is pity and tenderness and a great sensibility in this novel, whose delicacy and sympathetic understanding mark a new stage in the author's literary development

"PERSONS AND PLACES" by GEORGE SANTAYANA

J. B. Priestley (*Book Soc News*): "The work of a powerful and distinguished mind. Santayana is a philosopher of distinction in the academic sense, and he is also a real philosopher, that is, a man whose habit and pleasure it is to think widely and profoundly about life. Furthermore, he happens to be one of the best prose writers of our time. A book to buy and keep and re-read"

10/- net

"ALL GLORIOUS WITHIN" by BRUCE MARSHALL 8/6 net

John Betjeman (*Daily Herald*): "Mr Marshall writes in a consciously simple style. The main purpose of the book is to show a happy life of the spirit in sordid surroundings and amid cruelty, lust, murder, greed, and bigotry. An exciting novel to make you smile and weep."

3rd edition printing

10 ORANGE ST

CONSTABLE

LONDON WC2

Chinese and Indian stories offers the hope that their techniques will be studied to advantage here because naturalism and reportage, which are the stock-in-trade of the European literary magazine, are strictly limited means of communication.

In the present volume Hsiao Ch'ien is experimenting within the range of the sketch. He displays the fine instinct of the artist throughout by never departing from the basic emotions in spite of the excitements of a war-ridden China. It is the eternal passion in the title story, as it is the ever present courage and pity in which he seeks inspiration. And even in a story like *The Philatelist*, where the mood of the complacent individualist is transformed towards a respect for realities, it is through affection and not the sledgehammer of political words. Everywhere there is awareness in the writing that human beings are not eminently reasonable, that they are swayed by all those instincts and emotions which form the incalculable elements in man's nature, and which constitute at once the poetry of life and the pity of it.

One would like to see a larger volume of Hsiao Ch'ien's work, however. For though this book has the charm and grace of a very individual lyric talent, it gives the reader only a bowing acquaintance with a polite Chinese gentleman who seems somehow to cultivate evasiveness as if it were a virtue.

MULK RAJ ANAND

POEMS FROM THE DESERT. Eighth Army. Foreword by Field-Marshal Montgomery. Harrap. 6s.

AIR FORCE POETRY. Edited by JOHN PUDNEY and HENRY TREECE. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

TEN SUMMERS. Poems, 1933-43. JOHN PUDNEY. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

SERVICE POETRY, by its nature, can rarely have the time or concentration expended on it to make it a permanent

LANDSCAPE VERSE

Chosen by JOHN BETJEMAN and GEOFFREY TAYLOR

With 16 original Lithographs by John Piper

The first in a new and unusual series of anthologies entitled "New Excursions into English Poetry".

"It is a joy in these days to read such a beautifully produced book"—A. A. Milne in the *Sunday Times*. 10s. 6d. net

THE BEAUTIES OF SCENERY

A Geographical Survey by VAUGHAN CORNISH, D.Sc

A geographical manual of scenery, with the addition of a chapter on Architectural Interiors, apart from which the subject of aesthetic geography could not be regarded as complete.

"A remarkable little book"—*Country Life*. 6s. net

TEN MODERN PROPHETS

J. B. COATES

The authors studied in this volume are Gerald Heard, Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley, C. E. M. Joad, D. H. Lawrence, John MacMurray, Karl Marx, John Middleton Murry, Olaf Stapledon, and H. G. Wells 8s. 6d. net

FREDERICK MULLER LTD.

TO KEEP ABREAST WITH TO-DAY'S BOOKS, COME TO

LONDON'S BRIGHTEST BOOKSHOP

You can **ALWAYS** see them in profusion here.

Engravers and Diestampers; Exclusive Notepapers; Visiting Cards for Official and Professional use engraved promptly and accurately.

Only a few minutes from Piccadilly.

TRUSLOVE & HANSON

14a CLIFFORD STREET (New Bond Street), W.1.

WANTED MODERN BOOKS

**CHILDREN'S
ENCYCLOPAEDIA**

(10 Vols.)

**ENCYCLOPAEDIA
BRITANNICA**

(14th Edition)

SETS, etc.

HIGH PRICES PAID

ROBERT CHRIS, 8 Cecil Court, LONDON, W.C. 2

TEMPLE BAR 6700

addition to the best of the art. Nevertheless, though *Poems from the Desert* may not be much shakes as poetry, they do represent the attempt of men miles from home, in the middle of a desert and of a war, to say what they feel of those things, and what those things have made them feel about other; to fumble, as well, through words to an ordered view of life, a way of thinking. To a lesser extent this is true of the Air Force anthology—lesser not derogatorily, but because more of the writers in that anthology would, one feels, have in any event sought to use words.

In the winter of 1942, the Eighth Army's Education Officer organized a competition for poems written in the Western desert. Four hundred and three were submitted, and twenty-six of these are now assembled. Field-Marshal Montgomery, who introduces them, suggests in his foreword that "perhaps it is not too fanciful to see in the poems something of the greatness of mind and spirit with which this valiant Army has been fired, and to which so many of its finest achievements can be attributed." It is not belittling this official view of poetry to say that one sees that not so much in the poems themselves as in the fact of their having been written. Most of the work shows the common tendency to fall back on old forms when faced with new experience. Thus Lieut. M. St. J. Wilmoth writes of the Desert as

"The silence of vast spaces, where even
The wind is soundless from the lack of any
Obstacle to vent its opposition on,"

and Sgt. Seton-Smith, on the other hand, apostrophizes England with

"Thou art a gem; and, set within a sea
of azure blue, thy white cliffs nobly rise."

Sgt. Boodson gives a surer picture of *Cyprus*, and Signalman Knight a vivid one of *Christmas in Tobruk*. But, on the

The Next Development in Man

By LANCELOT LAW WHYTE

"An interesting book, full of sharp criticism and suggestions. Few writers get as near as Mr. Whyte to a discovery of what is deeply and fundamentally wrong with our civilization."—*Spectator*.

15s. net.

Red Prelude

By DAVID FOOTMAN

"A work of real historical scholarship as well as a fascinating picture gallery of conspirators against tyranny, and a thrilling story of their plots and adventures . . . a real and serious contribution to understanding between Great Britain and the Soviet Union."—SIR ERNEST BARKER, *Sunday Times*.

12s. 6d. net.

CRESSET PRESS

Poetry by Dr. Marie Stopes

Early Work

Man, Other Poems and
a Preface - - - 3/6

1939

Love Songs for Young

Lovers - - - 5/- & 10/6

JOHN MASEFIELD, O.M., the Poet Laureate: "I hope you will write more poems like *We Burn*. In these you are doing well what no one else could do."

Oriri. 1940 - - - 3/6

BERNARD SHAW: "Amazing! It will keep up your new reputation as a poet nobly."

Instead of Tears. In Memoriam to H.M.S. Cossack - - - 6d.

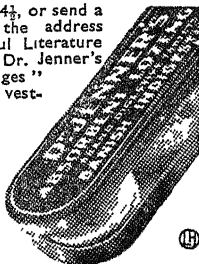
LAURENCE BINYON: "Thank you for a glowing poem."

William Heinemann, Ltd.
LONDON

"Just what the Doctor ordered" - for **INDIGESTION**

150 years ago Dr. Jenner, of Vaccination fame, discovered the treatment for Indigestion, which doctors in increasing numbers have ever since prescribed for their patients. This proved specific for the quick relief of Acid Stomach and other Digestive Disorders can be obtained from Chemists everywhere.

Prices 1/5 and 3/4, or send a 1d. stamp, to the address below, for helpful Literature and Sample of "Dr. Jenner's Absorbent Lozenges" in this handy vest-pocket case



**SAVORY &
MOORE LTD.**

Dept., A.L.
143 New Bond
Street,
London, W. 1

whole, the main interest of the book is that, again to quote, they were written, "let it be remembered, at the very time that the Desert Army was wholly engaged in hitting Rommel 'right out of Africa for six'."

To date, the prose books of the R.A.F. have exceeded those of the other Services, but there have been few specifically airman-poets in the sense that there are soldier-poets. Now, John Pudney and Henry Treece adduce ninety pages of poems by men in the R.A.F. and F.A.A. to give "a cross-section of the thoughts and feelings of an articulate few" in those Services. There are no "discoveries" but the level of accomplishment is respectable, and there will be many anxious to read the kind of poems airmen write and to know what impels them to poetry. So far, verse has not given us the soul of the flying-man as have such prose-books as *Fighter Pilot* or *One of Our Pilots is Safe*, and it would be rash to assume these poets are at their best when, so to speak, in the air; too often, as with Ronald Wilcox's "suddenly life leaps to a swift crescendo" or E. Denyer Cox's "O, the great joy of it!" the result is more a reminder of Henry Beeching's bicycle than of a revelation of life at heights unknown to the majority. The answer would seem to be that airmen take the air for granted and the revelation they seek is the resolution of their own hopes, loneliness, loss, and distaste for their mission. The editors, Vernon Watkins, Peter Hellings, John Bayliss, and the two deceased poets, Gervase Stewart and Timothy Corsellis, will be familiar to readers; of the rest, O. C. Chave is facile in a last-war manner, but can achieve precision with

"the long bright lanes of sun

Ask not the parentage of those who fly,"

and T. R. Hodgson, Hugh Popham, and R. F. W. Grindal seem to me the most successful of the remainder.

John Pudney himself puts out a selection of ten years'

AIRBORNE FORCES SECURITY FUND

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

MOST units of the fighting forces have Benevolent Funds and organizations, to safeguard the welfare of their men and their families, and a fund for Airborne Troops—a new branch of the Army—has been founded.

Airborne Troops are composed of picked men from every regiment in the Army, who have volunteered for airborne service. These men recognize the risk they are facing, but they have one anxiety—what of their families and dependants?

It is to relieve this anxiety—and to enable these men to go into battle with their minds at ease on this point—that the Airborne Forces Security Fund has been established. It was founded by those who realized the necessity to provide immediate aid to Airborne Troops and their dependants—in the form of advice, money, and goods—in the event of distress or hardship not otherwise provided for. Already over 3,400 claims for financial help and more than 2,700 cases of distress other than financial have been dealt with by the Fund.

The response already received to appeals for donations to this Fund shows that the need for the Fund is appreciated and it is hoped that generous contributions will be made. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Airborne Forces Security Fund, 70 Eaton Place, London, S.W. 1.

Patrons :

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR JOHN DILL, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel
Commandant, Parachute Regiment.
ADMIRAL THE LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN, G.C.V.O., D.S.O., A.D.C.,
Supreme Commander, S.E. Asia
LIEUT.-GENERAL F. A. M. BROWNING, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Com-
mander 1st Allied Airborne Army.

Trustees :

LIEUT.-GENERAL F. A. M. BROWNING, C.B., D.S.O., <i>Chairman.</i>	MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOCELYN
HARVEY BOWRING	PERCY, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
CHARLES H. CRABTREE	MAJOR-GENERAL THE LORD
BRIGADIER The Hon. H. K. M.	RENNELL OF RODD, K.B.E., C.B.
KINDERSLEY, M.B.E., M.C.	BRIGADIER A. G. WALCH, O.B.E.
HERMAN LEBUS, C.B.E., J.P.	
CAPTAIN J. M. PEARSON	

Founder and Hon. Secretary · CAPTAIN J. M. PEARSON

Hon. Treasurer · MAJOR the Hon. PATRICK C. KINNAIRD, M.C.
(Barclay's Bank, Limited, 1 Pall Mall, London, S.W. 1.)

(This space is presented by The Brendin Publishing Co., Ltd.)

work which he maintains has taught him he has been "writing war-poetry all the time". Certainly, the verses of his several recent books gain by being seen in perspective with other of his poems. He is one of the few poets of the thirties who would seem to have found release in this war—a direct response which is in part relief from questioning. He is also one of the few to write specifically Air Force poetry and, as a professional writer, has made himself articulate for the many who are not. The result is necessarily a vast deal of verse-reportage and shared but surface emotion—"Your vengeance shall be Spring upon the earth" and

"If men with lives to live have any luck
The bell will toll for them another day."

This sort of thing can, of course, go on and on, and there are moments when I would rather have one longer and more compact for a dozen of the short ones, each composed of a single emotion, swiftly caught. But they are part of the conditions they celebrate—short lives, short leaves; time for a quick one, time for a poem. And no time to re-work them, for though most of them are short, they are nearly all a line or a verse too long. It takes Mr. Pudney twelve lines to liken a barrage balloon to elephants that "graze upon the pastures of the sky", and that really deserves only an adjective, not a poem; the secret of Housman was sparseness as well as slick sentiment.

R. H.

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

NOVEMBER

EDITORIAL

1944

SO FAR AS I have seen, Turkey has not yet stated her intentions with regard to the forthcoming Peace Conference. She is, it must not be forgotten, an Ally, so will presumably be there. France, we know, has every intention of assisting and the latest to join in the rush of "you want the best seats—we'll take them" is Spain. Spain, it seems, considers she has her right to be present if only because she has not actively participated in the war at all.

At this rate, logic would suggest that one of the few countries to be overlooked in the scramble might be Great Britain. Logic, in the Who's Who of Allies, has rather gone by the board in this war. Nevertheless, more surprising things have happened already and present events in Switzerland or China, to take two widely different instances, show that we have by no means scraped the bottom of that barrel whose name is Pandora's Box. Already, liberated countries find that having two armies instead of one on their soil is not quite the dream of peace and plenty they had imagined, and if it should be felt that this is all the fault of the British, such a view would be easy to understand. Without the British, the war would have ended in 1940. We all agree on that. But whereas we may see ourselves as lonely champions, others may allow themselves to consider us as continuers of war and wreckers of havoc. Particularly would this view find favour among those seeking excuses with which to cover up their own laying down of arms and leaving others to their fate.

No one enjoys their cities, homes, livestock, orchards and vineyards being destroyed. Some of us may feel that we shall not be very welcome in Europe after the war ; others of us may ourselves feel that we do not want to go there.

As for our own country, it may be impossible to leave it, but it becomes increasingly difficult to live in it. So in these dark days before dawn (itself always a trying period) it is pleasant to look outwards and overseas and, with so many from Australia and New Zealand in the streets on their way to the battlefields, it is but slight grace to acquaint ourselves with something of those countries, in so many ways less regimented than our own. This issue is accordingly, save for a review section, devoted to the Antipodes. War conditions make it not as representative as I would wish ; indeed, though for some time announced, the number has been frequently postponed in the hope of more material arriving. But if variety is not its strong point, interest, I hope, is : and so I will leave you.

IN SIGHT OF LAND

By GEORGE MILLS

THERE WERE A few minutes to go before sunrise, and in the cool, still greyness we stood along the starboard rail, unwashed, unshaven, carrying our water-bottles and life-belts, looking to the south-west, waiting for Australia to appear on the horizon.

The blonde ship's carpenter was talking. "Brisbane," he said, "why, they got no hotels there. No place a guy can stay: In 'Frisco how many hotels you got? Hell, you got hundreds." He flapped his hand loosely from the wrist in disgust.

These days we were all travellers. They had set us wandering, young, ignorant, bewildered, and resentful where once only the privileged and the appreciative had set foot and we were apt to judge countries and cities by such insubstantial standards as girls, street-lighting, canteens, traffic regulations, ice-cream, and Sundays.

"You Limeys'll get plenty beer here," said the carpenter, compensatingly, jerking his head towards the horizon. "You like beer, huh?" He spat over the side.

"Hey, see that light," cried the soldier they called Schroeder.

We looked in the direction of his outstretched arm and there, in the distance, in what looked like a long patch of cloud, a light winked suddenly.

The word travelled down the rail. A light. A light must mean a lighthouse. Somewhere out there would be people, living on that lighthouse. People who belonged to the land like us. We hadn't seen them for twenty-eight days.

Klinch, one of the ship's crew who looked after the refrigeration, came up on deck and stood behind us, puffing at his pipe.

"Well, there's Australia," he said. "You British'll soon be with your buddies. Drinking jolly old ile, I siy. Look there."

Then we saw that the great mass piled along the horizon was not cloud but land. Now, as the haze slowly lifted, there could be no mistaking that hard outline, its immense length.

We watched it in silence, expecting somehow to see a harbour or a city take shape, but it remained merely a dark silhouette, distant and mysterious. Even the winking light had vanished.

The fat top-sergeant came along the deck, his shaven head glistening.

"Chow time," he called. "Let's go, men."

The carpenter turned from the rail and regarded him coldly. "Hey, soldier," he said, "ain't you got no emotions. There's land out there and these guys want to see it. That army chow ain't worth eatin', anyway."

Down below, in a new atmosphere of excitement and noisy discussion, we lined up for breakfast along the passageway that led into the little mess.

The single fresh-water tap which had served four hundred men during the voyage still trickled into the bowl. In the kitchen, behind the wire grille, the cooks and mess-orderlies worked, stripped to the waist.

"You guys heard the news?" someone said. "There's land out there."

"Yeah, but it ain't home," replied one of the cooks dampeningly.

As the queue moved along the mess, waiters doled out the lukewarm coffee, the little sausages, the chopped raw cabbage and peanut butter that had become our daily breakfast.

In the mess the deck was as slippery as ever with its coating of grease, coffee spillings, squashed butter pats, and, balancing our mess-tins, we slid and skidded across to the tables as the ship rolled.

All conversation had to be shouted here because of the

pounding din of the engines and the incessant roar of hot steam as the mess-orderlies, or K.P.s as they were called, heated the water in the tanks where we washed our mess-tins.

The boredom and surliness had gone from the men's faces. Even the M.P.s controlling the queue kidded us "Hey, you guys seen any kangaroos up there?"

The sun came streaming down the iron stairway into the mess, lighting up the wet, untidy tables, the rows of men busily eating, with their lifebelts slung around them.

Yesterday it had been rough, and the less squeamish ones as they sat eating could see the others in the toilet compartment, vomiting and retching into the lavatory pans. The ship was not designed for privacy.

This morning, while we sat at breakfast, Merritt began playing the piano. It stood in the mess at the foot of the iron stairway leading up to the after deck. Yesterday the water had come over the side, down the stairway, and drenched the piano, but now it seemed little the worse as Merritt, above the din of the engines, thumped out the hit-tune, "My Devotion," which we had picked up in San Francisco.

For twenty-eight nights, standing around the piano in the hot, smoky, overcrowded little mess, eating our Fig Newton biscuits, swigging cautiously at our water-bottles, while the sweat poured from us, we had listened to Merritt's selections, singing, tapping our feet, seeing Merritt's wet, streaming back and heaving shoulder-blades in our dreams.

Klinch and the fat little Mexican who was his assistant on the refrigeration plant, would stand and listen intently. Klinch could not understand how it was that an English soldier was forever playing American melodies. He knew English soldiers only through Kipling and to him, Merritt, with his piano-playing and his swing, seemed an incongruity.

The little Mexican, unbothered by such comparisons,

would lean over and shout, "Hey, English kid, you play nice. I used to play guitar once. You play my favourite? 'Gettin' Sentimental?' You play that nice," and when Merritt obliged he would turn privately to Klinch, roll his eyes, and giggle. "Boy, oh boy. That reminds me of that pigeon on Geary in San Francisco. You remember?"

Now that we were in sight of land, I was sorry to be leaving Klinch. During his spells off-duty he had talked to me about his home in California, the university he had attended before going to sea, his new-found interest in all things Polynesian, and his desire, after the war, to come out and live, like Robert Louis Stevenson, in the islands.

Together we laughed at and attempted to diagnose the differences and antagonisms which sprang up, aboard ship, between the party of British soldiers, of whom I was one, and the Americans.

We decided that the British were essentially amateur by temperament, for as soon as Merritt had ceased playing the piano another Englishman would take his place and pick out some tune or other, no matter how crudely. But no American ever touched the thing.

In the hot Pacific afternoons, leaning on the rail, looking out over the smooth, milky-blue water, we discussed all kind of things, oppositely and yet in the same groping, inconclusive, semi-educated manner that seems to distinguish serious young people of the middle-classes the world over.

Even in the confined quarters of a Liberty ship the others did not mix at all unless it was when duty brought them together on submarine watch or fatigues, when they seemed to establish common contact only in laughing abuse of one another's national customs, idiom, and so on.

After breakfast began the painful business of shaving. During the voyage there had been no fresh water available for this, save what we could gather in our water-bottles

after lining up in the crawling queues at the water-tap. So now, on the last day, we recklessly emptied these into the wash-bowls and hacked off our beards.

Then, down in the chaos of the hold, which served as sleeping quarters, we began to sort our kit, taking off our filthy denims and donning thick, creased battle-dress, while the Americans changed into elegant sun-tans.

A fatigue party was detailed and swept out the hold from end to end, brushing the Fig Newton cartons, the empty packs of Lucky Strike and Camel, Hershey chocolate wrappers, Pepsi-Cola bottles, Prince Albert tobacco tins, orange peel, and cigarette stubs into a great multi-coloured pile.

Then, eagerly, we ran up the stairway to the sunlit deck for another glimpse of the land.

There, to starboard, where for a month only the empty sea and sky had been visible, it lay, vast, solid and reassuring. We could now discern a faint, white line of surf, and beyond that a strange, dry-looking country, covered in grey-green scrub.

Meanwhile another phenomenon had appeared. A corvette, her masts dipping from side to side, danced some distance ahead of us in the choppy waters.

"The Limey Navy," said the carpenter with a grin, pugnacious as ever.

First the winking light, then the land, and now another vessel, the first we had seen. The long days of loneliness, danger, and boredom had suddenly terminated with these three events.

"Next thing you know you'll be seein' a woman," said the carpenter.

From across the deck the fat top-sergeant was shouting. "All personnel below," he called. And down we went British and American, officers, N.C.O.s, and men, excited as schoolboys, for debarkation orders.

BRIGHT BIRDS ARE NOT SO SONGLESS

By JOHN MANIFOLD

PROFESSOR MURDOCH OF the University of Western Australia once suggested the compilation of an anthology of Australian characters in foreign literature as a dreadful warning to us ; really there is not a wide field to choose from—the Conan Doyle character who expires mysteriously muttering about “ the Ballarat gang ”, the Oscar Wilde millionaire, the universal Rich Uncle from the Goldfields, the romantic outlaw of the Captain Moonlight type, the superhumanly tall Anzac of last-war fiction, even the sinister “ tueur au boomerang ” on whom French romans policiers occasionally call, and of course the good old Botany Bay convict with the heart of gold. An appalling lot we are, are we not ? Hardly less appalling than the English characters in our own novels—the convict, the remittance man, the Gentleman-Once, the aide-de-camp, the tourist, the Dook-in-Disguise, the pommie jackeroo—(“ What ? England ? That dreadful place where the convicts come from ? ”) But doubtless our degraded landscape accounts for our degradation :—

A land where bright blossoms are scentless
And songless bright birds.

Thank you Masfield, and thank you Kipling, and thank you Lawrence, for dispelling that vulgar error anyhow.

Confronted with the savagery and *acharnement* of our politics, the oddity of our sense of humour, the inhuman stupidity of our laws and the easy way we ignore them, by our hair-trigger national touchiness and jealousy of criticism, by our strong revolutionary and innovatory tradition combined with intense reluctance to be hurried, by our artistic and musical and culinary richness and the excellence of the wines we don't export, by our atrocious export produce in the same lines, by our oral literature and

by the Melbourne Cenotaph, the English visitor (who expects us to be English) decides that we must be American, and the continental visitor (who usually expects us to be black and naked) decides that we are a stray bit of old Russia or an outlying province of Spain.

In point of fact we are just Australian. Not American, not at all European, above all not English. A century and a half of strong sunlight cures most people of being very English. Also, a lot of us started by being French, German, Italian, Polish, Irish, Scandinavian, and Slavonic. The gold-rush to Ballarat and Bendigo, you may remember, occurred shortly after the defeat of most of the European revolutions of '48, and we profited by harbouring the revolutionaries. Our own First Republic fought under a triumvirate of a Garibaldino, an Australian, and an Irishman, but it fought under the Flag of Stars.

The most conclusive proof of our existence as a nation is our literature. Unbeknownst to most other people we have been secreting a steady flow of verse and a thinner one of prose for most of our life, and without going back to Wentworth and Harpur for material we can produce for inspection an array of poets and novelists, alive or recently dead, which bears comparison with anyone. I cannot go into details of personalities, but it is at least possible to indicate schools and tendencies.

Since Lawson's day the most apparent cleavage in Australian literature has been between the Nationalists and the Europeanizers; it is the same quarrel that was fought out in Russia in Gogol's time, in Spain by the "Generación de '98", in America only yesterday. On the whole (though there are very striking exceptions) the socially conscious writers whether Anarchist, Socialist, or Nationalist tend towards *literary* nationalism; the upholders of the status quo, the Art-for-Art's-sakers (including Surrealists), and the commercial writers generally are Europeans. But

Brennan and Baylebridge are both in the political-Nationalist pantheon, and both were Europeanizing poets as far as style goes: Patterson, poet of the landed gentry, was nationalist in style but highly nostalgic and often Imperial in content; Norman Lindsay, though arch-priest of an Art-for-Art's-sake cult, writes a beautiful colloquial Australian prose and has produced immortal studies of purely national types and landscapes in both prose and painting. Indeed there are times when his book for children, *The Magic Pudding*, seems the purest product of the nationalist school. I hope I haven't given you a headache. I know that it's puzzling, but we take even such involved literary issues rather seriously—a French visitor once remarked that the next Battle of Hernani would be fought in Australia.

One "school" of Australian culture that usually gets overlooked is that of the *Émigrés*: we have a habit of driving our best writers, artists, soldiers, and politicians into serving as mercenaries abroad. Under the heading "Émigrés" one thinks at once of Melba, Austral, Grainger, Gilbert Murray, Gordon Childe, W. J. Turner, Jack and Philip Lindsay, Ruth Naylor, Constant Lambert, Jeanne Jouve, and Louise Dyer: some of these are England's gain, or Europe's or the world's, but they are Australia's loss—and there are many more of them than I have named.

To indicate the many subdivisions of the main schools would be a long job; we have an un-English fondness for literary "movements", "trends", "schools", manifestos, clubs, and regional groupings. The regions run with state frontiers very often: Sydney's history is not Melbourne's, nor is the Western District cast from the mould of Capricornia—but there are regions inside states as well:—Gippsland and the Mallee, Sydney and the Riverina, Fremantle and Arnhem Land are in the same state all right, but not in the same tradition nor the same landscape.

I wonder if that is partly why so many of our visitors compare us to Spain? We are separatist, individualist, anarchist, to our bootsoles: yet we are almost too conscious of our nationality.

I am no traitor to my own region when I say that Sydney's civilization is the most unmistakable, the most conscious and coherent of us all. Sydney, mark you, is no more Australia than Paris is France; but just as there is a civilization that is "French of Paris" so there is one that is "Australian of Sydney", and there is a resemblance between the two. Sydney has even reached the sophisticated stage of producing a recognizable type of "The Sydney Novel", whose ingredients are a beach-wench (always blond, always rather speechless, always a bit statuesque and/or leopardish), a married man (always a business-man, nearly always in a state of exasperated frustration), and his wife (beautiful but irritating, or beautiful but tired, or an invalid or something), and most of the action goes on in bright sunlight and flowers, or in romantic darkness. Sorry, Sydney, but those are the facts. Fortunately there is always the "Larrikin" novel (i.e. the low-life picaresque) to counterbalance this.

At its worst the Larrikin-type novel is still scabrous and funny; at its best it is L. W. Lower's *Here's Luck* (last heard of in its eighth edition and still going strong) which is little short of a work of genius. Its ingredients are harder to define, but they may be guessed at when I say that it descends from *Scènes de la Vie de Bohême*, *Les Mystères de Paris*, *Gil Blas*, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *The Newgate Calendar*, and *The Beggar's Opera*, and calls Damon Runyon cousin.

Against these urban types there is a classifiable profusion of "Outback Novels" among which the works of Katharine Susannah Pritchard and Kylie Tennant take a high place. Fortunately both these very gifted and very Australian

novelists are known in England, so I am spared the tough job of saying why they are so good. The outback has always produced good writers, of whom Lawson, the first, was (still, I think) the greatest. It is an atrocity that he should be so little known outside Australia—only *While the Billy Boils* exists in an English edition (Travellers Library, 2 vols.), and his verse is completely unknown over here, though he is incontestably one of our greatest poets.

Of our historical novelists, Marcus Clarke and Henry Handel Richardson have received European recognition: Brian Penton has even received too much for his merits. Xavier Herbert (he fits into no category) has yet to be heard of in England, though his *Capricornia* is selling its millions in an American edition.

It is unfortunate that Ion Idriess should be known abroad; we have so many better and less-known writers. He has monopolized the attention which our scanty prose should command entire.

Of our verse, though it is more plentiful, I shall say less, for, as P. R. Stephenson said, "Almost everybody in Australia has written at least *some* good verse," and I fear to offend by omission too many poets whom I have not managed to read. P. R. S. was slightly wrong, though; he should have said, "Almost everybody has *composed* some good verse," for some of the best is among the great stratum of unwritten folk-song.

Folk-song with us is alive, a real tradition, as it is in Spain and South America, and there are very few even of our academicians who have not felt its influence. The least folk-songy poet we ever produced was Brennan; and he, alas, is known even to the bulk of his compatriots only by a few anthology-pieces. Among the great, the most thorough-going folk-songster was Lawson, and he holds securely with us the place that Burns holds with Scotsmen.

Here it is, of course, that the conflict between nationalist

and Europeanizing schools of thought is fiercest. The former say, "Except only Brennan, which of your poets can stand comparison in English with the great English poets? Besides, if you must write in a foreign language, isn't Latin or Esperanto better?" And the latter reply by muttering a rude quatrain about, "Murrumburra, Mere-mendicoowoke, Yoularbudgeree," which is supposed to summarize the subjects covered by nationalist writers.

Without taking sides for the moment, I think there are certain specifically Australian characteristics of our verse which are common in greater or lesser degree to both sides: a strict sense of form, a wilder melancholy and a grimmer humour than anything in England, a high proportion of satire, invective, and incitement to disaffection, even Brennan, the quietist, the introspective and rarified disciple of Mallarmé, comes out with a roar of:

"Red flame or deluge, let the end be soon!"

a sense of *panache*, a thoroughly pagan morality and a feeling of sunlight. Colours are brighter with us.

It is possible that when Adam Lindsay Gordon was given a perch in Westminster Abbey as "Australia's National Poet", this unfortunate choice was made with a view to offending neither of our conflicting schools. It has in fact aroused the equal hostility of both, which is not quite the same thing. Percival Serle's Bibliography lists over 1,400 published poets in Australia and New Zealand: even if the revolutionary element is excluded, that leaves over a score of worthy persons to pick from. But to foist upon us an unreadable foreigner who propagated in person most of the misconceptions of which we are still the victims—or, *ça c'est le maximum!* So far, not even our threat to erect a similar statue with a similar inscription to the Comte de Saint-Evremond has caused any mitigation of this insult. It seems that the scope here is for a

decent man with a stick of dynamite in the traditional manner.

The future of Australian literature can be left to itself. We have got past the experimental stage, and it is no novelty to us to see ourselves in print: we have worn our own ruts into tradition, and there is enough of our literature to form a body with its own characteristics. I hope that we shall remain comparatively free from English influences which have never exercised any other than harmful and debilitating effect on prose and verse. One thing that I should like to see developed more strongly is a liaison with our Spanish-speaking neighbours across the road, especially with Chile whose government and history is so sympathetic to our own. Our younger poets are already establishing good relations retrospectively with the literature and lore of the black aboriginals whom in the past we so shamefully mistreated. And, naturally, the strong cultural alliance with France, where our greatest painters went to school, and where our Wanderjahre have been spent ever since the discovery of Europe, will be deeper and stronger yet with the resurgent France whom General de Gaulle is leading to victory, and who has put out in the last few months such a strong showing that literature and national self-respect are inseparable.

SKELETON BIBLIOGRAPHY

(This represents only the bare essentials of a reading list. For a fairly detailed one the reader is referred to Percival Serle's *Bibliography of Australasian Poetry and Verse*, Palmer's *History of Australian Literature*, and (for the classical period only) Jose's *The Romantic Nineties*.)

HENRY LAWSON. *Collected Prose*, 2 vols. Angus and Robertson, 1937.

—— *Collected Poems*, 1 vol.

—— *While the Billy Boils*, 2 vols. Travellers' Library.

PATTERSON (BANJO). *The Old Bush Songs*. Platypus Library.

—— *Collected Poems*. Angus and Robertson.

- CHRIS BRENNAN. *Selections*. Limited Editions Society, Sydney.
- H. M. GREEN. *Christopher Brennan*. Angus and Robertson, 1939.
- MARCUS CLARKE. *For the Term of his Natural Life*.
- H. H. RICHARDSON: any, or better, all of the novels.
- L. W. LOWER. *Here's Luck*. Angus and Robertson, 8th ed., 1939.
- KYLIE TENNANT. *The Battlers*. Gollancz, London. ("Outback.")
- *Ride On, Stranger*. Gollancz, London. ("Sydney.")
- K. S. PRITCHARD. *Haxby's Circus*. Florin Books, London.
- Short stories, wherever obtainable.
- LEONARD MANN. *Murder in Sydney*. A very anarchist work.
- NORMAN LINDSAY. *The Magic Pudding*. Angus and Robertson, and Hamish Hamilton, London.
- *Redheap*. (? Faber and Faber), London.
- *Potboilers*. Werner Laurie, London.
- JACK LINDSAY. *Rebels of the Goldfields* (for boys). London, about 1937.
- PAUL WENZ. *L'homme du soleil couchant*.
- BAYLEBRIDGE. *Love Redeemed* (sonnets). Tallabilla Press.
- *National Notes* (politics). Tallabilla Press.
- The poems, wherever obtainable, of: Henry Kendall, William Gay, Victor Daley, Sydney Jephcott, Dowell O'Reilly, E. J. Brady, Bartlett Adamson, Roderick Quinn, Louis Esson, Mary Gilmore, Dorothea Mackellar, Bernard O'Dowd, Hugh McRae, Vance Palmer, Frank Wilmot, Kenneth Slessor, Patrick White, Dave Campbell, Ian Mudie, Edgar Holt, Kathleen Watson, and Garry Lyle.
- Anthologies almost always give the wrong approach and are usually Europeanizing to the point of insolence. It is on this count that the *Oxford Book of Australasian Verse* cannot be recommended. Collins, London, have done a far better one, but its name escapes me. *The High Road of Australian Verse* (Oxford University Press) includes a historical introduction which is short but useful.

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF AUSTRALIA

By JACK LINDSAY

AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE. E. MORRIS MILLER, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Tasmania (begun by Sir John Quick and F. J. Broomfield). Melbourne University Press and Oxford University Press. 2 vols.

THIS VAST WORK of 1074 pages with its very searching bibliographies, provides the first comprehensive view of Australian literature. The outlines are not lost despite the crush of details ; a sense of values dominates the treatment. (I can testify to the thoroughness by the surprise I felt in finding listed some oddments that my brother Philip and myself turned out on a small hand-press in 1924, which I had quite forgotten and of which not more than half a dozen copies could have got out.) Here at last one can see Australian literature in perspective and follow out all the veins of its development.

I think the labour was worth while. Australian literature *has* a development. Though without shattering masterpieces, it owns an organic structure, in which is actively reflected the expanding structure of national life. Because of the close texture of the relationship, and because of the peculiar intensity of certain simplified patterns of class-conflict which underlie Australian history, there is an interest in the literature which is all its own and repays study. The weakness of *Australian Literature* is that it makes no attempt to relate the authors to their historical environment, or to realize the unity of Australian history and culture. In this essay we shall rapidly review the main phases of Australian history, and then briefly indicate the impingement of the literature.

I

The history belongs directly to world-history in several important points. Australia led the way into many basic

democratic achievements ; and mixed with these achievements are certain legal and economic developments in which Australia also acted as a pace-maker to the more industrialized areas of the world. How this strange result came about is surely worthy of more attention than has so far been paid to it. Australia saw the first complete throwing-off of feudal fetters on land. Political democracy (the ballot, universal suffrage, etc.) was first actualized in Australia, which saw the advent of a Labour Party long before England. Let us take the stages.¹

Period of Free Grants, 1788-1831.—Deprived of the American dumping-ground for convicts, the British Government looked at the virgin antipodes. A Utopian scheme was devised. The convicts were the more adventurous of the peasants dispossessed by the final rush of Enclosure Acts, those less ready to starve tamely. The governing class, who had taken the English land from the peasantry, had no cash-interest in Australian soil. Why not then set up the dispossessed peasants in the new continent after they had gone through a period of slave-toil that would break the land in ? Australia was to be a continent of contented peasant proprietors.

All went well the first few years. (Prison farm-economy, N.S.W., 1788-92.) But the Napoleonic wars broke communications, and when the imperial government got in touch again it found that the officers and officials had grabbed the broken-in areas. (Development was at first limited to the Sydney area, with the governor empowered to grant land to free or emancipist ; only small blocks were alienated ; but the arrival of pastoral interests demolished the scheme.) A Squirearchy had arisen. The peasants of Utopia found themselves in the same position as those of England, or rather in a far worse position, since there were

¹ *British Imperialism and Australia, 1783-1833*, by Brian Fitzpatrick. An important work, to which I owe much of my earlier summary. /

no towns to flee to. Large interests such as the Australian Agricultural Co. gained vast areas ; by 1831 four million acres were under the big owners and even a small quitrent was not paid.

The transition to a (capitalistically) free economy out of the benevolent despotism of the Utopian scheme came through the wool trade, the breeding of sheep for fine wool. MacArthur was the great Scoundrel and Creator of the Free Economy. In him we see the unscrupulous officer noting what chances of profit lay in the direct slave-exploitation of the helpless dumped human material, then moving into the area of big business by discovering the possibilities of Australia as a pastoral land linked with English textile industry. He set himself to smash the colony as a prison and a preserve for smallholders ; he smashed it. (Governor Hunter : "The labouring servants of the Crown had been before my arrival in this colony given away, were scattered all over the country and were employed for the benefit of private individuals." ¹)

The governors fought hard. The great antagonist of MacArthur was MacQuarrie, a faithful proconsul, who by the odd dialectics of history became the creator of Australian democracy ; for in fighting MacArthur he fought monopoly and championed the poor against the (economically) mighty. He wanted to use the convicts on public works and to give them small farms ; MacArthur wanted them as slaves.

We believe John MacArthur has been the scourge of this colony by fomenting quarrels between His Majesty's officers, servants, and subjects. His monopoly and extortion have been highly injurious to the inhabitants of every description.²

MacArthur retorted by accusing the governor of a policy that caused "democratic feeling" to take deep root and

¹ *Hist. Records of Aust.*, I, ii, 160 f.

² *Idem*, I, vi, 572 f., 578 f., 583 ; also H. V. Evatt, *Rum Rebellion*.

produce combinations that must be opposed with vigour ; in consequence " the democratic multitude would look upon their large possessions with envy and upon the proprietors with hatred ".¹

When MacQuarrie was recalled and Brisbane sent out, the small emancipees, despite all difficulties, were a large class. But under pressure from the industrial magnates who were gaining more power in England, Whitehall discarded the old scheme. The idea of Australia as a promising field of investment prevailed. From the 1820's the monopolists held control. With Darling the old instructions faded out. Capital started flowing in. From 1830's pauper emigration was encouraged. The convicts were seen only as the pawns on the inflowing capital and the large holdings. " The profitable association of these elements was to be assisted by the employment of expeirees and emancipists, no longer as independent small settlers, but as workers for wages for capitalist landholders. " ²

The Australian Agricultural Co. in 1924, got a charter for taking over waste-lands (the combine thus early taking the place of the squirearchy.) MacQuarrie, King, and Darling all fought a losing battle. After the big grant north of Sydney, the Company entered the buying field.³ So quickly had the Utopian Plan been disrupted, and the convict-yeomanry fallen under the same fate as the yeomanry of England—only, here, the evictive forces were moving into the area of big monopoly whereas in the motherland (or the U.S.A.) the growth of monopoly-forms was still largely inhibited on account of the vastly greater complexity of the ground to be covered.

¹ *MacArthur Records*, 349 f. (re 1821). He calls it an " absurd and mischievous policy ".

² Fitzpatrick, p. 295.

³ The turning point. In 1825 came sale of lands by private tender ; in 1831, by auction.

2

. *Land Sales and Pastoral Leases, 1821-1851.*—The convict-supply could not alone solve the labour-problem under these urgent pressures.¹ Hence schemes like that of Wakefield to create rapidly a proletariat. Wakefield wanted to speed up emigration, but on terms that left the emigrant no choice save to become a wage-earner. Land-prices were raised ; the revenue being needed for public works and the high prices needed to keep the poor emigrant from buying. Land-speculation began. The big sheep-owners squatted on the lands they wanted. For long they merely took out yearly licences. But, after a ten years' struggle, the sheepmen got security for their tenures in 1847, when an Order in Council defined three kinds of districts, the Settled, the Unsettled, and the Intermediate. The big men could now buy up the eyes of areas in the market and consolidate their hold.

At the same time a constitutional struggle had been going on. Up to 1823 the colony was a Crown Settlement. Then came a Legislative Council, with 5 to 7 men appointed by government.² Gradually civic rights were won, e.g. trial by jury instead of trial by military juries (1839). The growing capitalist class had to fight anew for the rights long past won by their fellows in England, and to this extent were the leaders of progress—the governor now acting for a reactionary state-control. The capitalists, however, of course wanted to limit the constitutional rights they won to themselves and to keep a high property-

¹ R. B. Madgwick, *Immig. into E. Australia, 1788-1851.*

² Wentworth, in Aust. Patriotic Assn., fought for constit. rights ; gained Leg. Council of 36—12 nominees of govt., rest chosen by freeholders with £200 and householders paying £20 (£10 in 1850) for 5 years. There was to be at least one yearly session. Councillors to own £2,000 freehold or return 5,100 yearly income. They could initiate measures and impose customs dues, but duties were collected by men responsible to home govt., and appropriations of revenue only on governor's recommendation. Governor was still his own prime minister ; disposed of crown lands and could veto all the Council's measures. 1850 saw a slight liberalization, but leg. still lacked control of executive.

qualification for any share in the government. Wentworth, explorer and poet, was their leader.¹

In 1840 transportation ended, and the labour-problem became acute. Wentworth, the fighter for freedom, now became the arch-reactionary. He led the big-owners in their demand for coloured slave-labour. In 1842 he formed the Association for the importation of coolies. This failed, but he tried with Chinese labour on his stations. In 1846 he fought for more convicts to be sent. This type of struggle went on all through the rest of the century and persisted into the next century. The big landholders never gave up hope of slave-labour and the whole of Australian history has been conditioned by this fact. The White-Australia policy of the Labour Party was the necessary retort, the only way in which, under the conditions, the battle against the big landholders could be successfully waged. It was not founded in any way on racialism, though at moments of strong stress it may have evoked racial prejudices.² (In 1921, the T.U.C. repudiated any idea of racial discrimination.)

¹ Also legalist, fighter for free press; explored way over Blue Mtns. that enabled pastoral expansion; led all the improvements.

² Early as 1783 J. Matra, and then Sir James Banks, Sir G. Young suggested that Chinese or Asiatic labour was needed. Phillip disagreed, but thought coloured females would meet a need. Wakefield looked for an Asiatic basis, a free market with millions of fellow-subjects of Chinese origin giving prosperity. In the pastoral labour-scarcity of 30's, Mackay, Indian planter, suggested to Gvnr. Bourke that hill-coolies from Bengal should be got on indenture (Mauritius system). A special committee approved, but Bourke dissented. Mackay, however, personally introduced coolies. Large orders were placed in India, but it seems the clamour against the ill-treatment of those who did come stopped the matter. (Indian Govt. next year suspended such emig.)

1837, the pastoralists tried to get Chinese from Singapore. Mackay tried further for Chinese. The *Sydney Morning Herald* proposed islanders. 1839-40 saw European influx. 1841 Mackay and big landowners sought govt. finance for coloured labour.

1842, Wentworth, etc., tried again with the Indians, the Indian Govt. having modified its Act. 686 prominent citizens (inc. 104 magistrates) petitioned for a system like that in Mauritius. The workers counter-agitated. The Govt. and Home Office opposed the intro. of coolies but was working on a scheme for the use of Malays. This was approved in 1844 but not carried out.

Coolie Assn. got some small shipments but couldn't go far against the Indian

3

The Mining Discoveries, 1850's.—Gold was badly needed by the capitalist system. The revolutionary pressure of the 40's in Europe was in part relieved by the gold discoveries in America and Australia. (Bronterre O'Brien explained the collapse of Chartism on these lines.) The gold kept prices reasonably stable as the system expanded towards its full world-extent. Australia saw a hurried influx of adventurers often Chartists or men who had taken part in the European revolutions of 1848. In them the independence of the pioneer was blended with conscious political antagonism to ruling-classes. They were no proletariat but were landless, propertyless, intensely opposed to restrictive measures. They brought an entirely new force into operation.

It was a force that drove the previous foes, state-bureaucracy and big landholders into a union of resistance. Under the cry of No Taxation without Representation—the cry that had led the American Revolution—the diggers of Ballarat rose in revolt against the licence-system. They

law. So had another try at Chinese and Islanders. New Hebrideans were brought to Twofold Bay. 1848–9 saw Chinese imported. Klings and Malays too. Chinese in Moreton Bay; as shepherds and also on one mind. 1854, a select committee admitted 2,400 into N.S.W. (but prob. much more came; figures were understated, as with the coolies).

The Chinese ran off for gold digging; the pastoralists turned to India again, and some got what they wanted. 1852, Wentworth proposed appeal to Indian Govt. 1854, Parkes in Leg. Council moved resolution against cheap coloured labour, but failed.

The gold-decade had other matters to think about, but from the early 60's on there began afresh efforts to get Kanakas, Chinese, and Indians—the Kanakas were used esp. in the sugarcane industry; the recruiting was done in so foul way that it roused many scandals and ceased about 1904. In the 70's came strenuous efforts to get Chinese and Indians; in the 90's Japs were sought, and once more Chinese.

All the while too was the problem of unindentured coloured labour. But we have here enough facts to show how close Australia came to being swamped by slave-labour. Only the vigorous activity of the organized working-class prevented this happening.

M. Willard, *Hist. of White Aust. Policy*; P. Campbell, *Chinese Coolie Emig. to Countries within the Brit. Emp.*

were defeated in the engagement of the Eureka Stockade, but they won the political contest. They had put forward the Chartist slogans and programme ; they saw themselves as the People against Tyranny ; the Chartist element was powerfully mingled with revolutionary emotions gathered from all over Europe. Hayes was Irish, Humffray was Welsh, Vern was Hanoverian, Raffaello was Italian. It was Chartism on an international plane directed against an alliance of State-power and monopoly-power, blasting the way straight into the political problems and solutions of the next three generations in Europe, where that alliance had to mature over a much more complex gathering of forces.¹

The juries refused to convict, without hearing the defence. All the plans of the Home Office collapsed. Into the area dominated previously by the family-squabbles of squatter and bureaucrat came a tremendous democratic force. Representative government was instituted under a genuine mass-pressure, and so the actualization of the Chartist points at once began. The fact that Chartism, when defeated in England, moved triumphantly into action in Australia and thence re-emerged into the area of world-history has been totally ignored by historians.² And it was the peculiar naked intensity of the class-conflict, its simplified basis, that provided the dynamic for this result. One must remember all the while, however, that this simplified basis, which in a sense prophetically expressed the future form of the contradiction within capitalism, was netted within the expanding conditions of European finance and industry via the wool-trade and the gold-market.

The marks of the constitutional change were the introduction of the ballot and the quick extension of the franchise.

¹ H. G. Turner, *Our Own Little Rebellion* ; Withers, *Hist. of Ballarat* (2nd ed., 1887) ; Ross, *Eureka* (1914).

² I first drew attention to this fact, I think, but it has been partly taken up since, e.g. in Morton's *Short Hist. of England*.

By 1893, for example, N.S.W. introduced manhood suffrage, one man one vote, without any property-qualification; and in 1902 extended the provisions to women. S. Australia in 1894 adopted universal adult suffrage. The first ballot law ever passed was that of Victoria, dated 19th March, 1856. The method was followed by the other colonies, but not till 1872 was it adopted in England. It arrived in British Columbia in 1873, in Canada in 1874, in Belgium in 1877, and entered the U.S.A. through Massachusetts as late as 1888, the other States toeing the line during the next fifteen years.

4

Selection before Survey, 1861-1890.—The failure of surface-mining meant that the mines could be developed only by capitalized firms. Lalor, the patriot of Eureka, now became a capitalist and the leader of anti-working-class activity. A sturdy population had to choose between proletarianization or a fresh struggle for the land. That struggle began, politically fused with the movement into democratic self-government. Under Robertson a long battle was fought for the small-man who wanted a small-holding. The scheme was called Free Selection and fought the squatters. The whole leasehold-area, surveyed or not, was made open to selection, and the selector could pick his land, 40 to 320 acres, anywhere at £1 an acre, pay a quarter of the sum as deposit and the rest virtually at will (with 5 per cent interest) if he resided five years and made improvements up to £1 an acre.

The squatters fought back, legally and illegally. They bought up the eyes of an area, were supported tooth and nail by the banks, used dummies, fetched paupers from asylums as fake-buyers, fake-shared the land out among the family. The effect then of the conflict was to enable the big landholders to emerge as big freeholders. The attempt to create a yeomanry was once more defeated.

But there were profound gains. The curious mixture of pioneering independence and proletarianized outlook, which had made Eureka such dynamite, continued to function. The fact that the working-class sections were opposed from first to last by developed monopolies gave them a passionate trade-union spirit in conditions that would superficially appear to discourage a collective attitude. The mature political relation of trade-union and political labour-party therefore appeared in Australia while in England the trade-unions were led by men floundering timidly and uneasily in class-collaboration. Trade-unions flourished from the 60's on, and 1872 the miners of Bendigo formed the Amalgamated Miners' Association of Victoria, the first industrial body to exert political influence. In 1884 the T.U. Congress urged the creation of a parliamentary party; Acts of 1890 provided pay for M.P.s; and finally as a result of the failure of the militant maritime strike of 1890, all the colonies but Tasmania saw Labour Parties formed. In 1880 the T.U.s of Balmain had put Garrard into Parliament as their representative, paying his salary; in 1883 West Sydney elected a Labour candidate. In 1891 the T.U. parliamentary commission drafted the constitution and platform for the Labour Electoral League. The programme urged further democratic advances and the interests of the producing class; it specified reforms in education, the eight hours day, land taxes aimed at the squatters, etc. In June 36 of its 45 candidates were elected. Labour candidates appeared in Queensland from 1886 on. In Victoria a stonemason was a Labour member as early as 1859. Gillie, the man elected by the miners of Ballarat in the same year, ratted; in 1880 the general secretary of the A.M.A. stood and lost; but by 1892 there were ten labour members in a House of 90. (By 1921, the T.U.C. put forward a programme of complete socialization of industry.)

In March, 1890, W. Lane (from Bristol) established *The Worker* in Brisbane on the basis of a T.U. subsidy, with motto, "Socialism in Our Time." Its theory appealed to Bax, Bellamy, George, and Marx.

The political foreground during this period was dominated by the liberal Parkes, who had been an English Chartist, writing prose and verse for the *Chartist*. He migrated in 1839 and worked as agricultural labourer, customs official, ivory-turner, toy-dealer, and journalist. He fought generally on radical reformist policies and ended as a keen worker for Commonwealth unity.¹

As part of its trade-union militancy Australia saw an early use of the strike-weapon in consolidated forms moving towards the General Strike. Here again it took over a Chartist method which had been lost in the motherland. The first known strike occurred in 1829 among Sydney compositors. By the 70's a high degree of solidarity had been achieved, the seamen and miners taking the lead in militancy and mutual aid. The need to use the strike-weapon against the attempted importations of slave-labour ensured that the strike would be conceived as essentially political as well as economic in Australia. What is more surprising is the way in which T.U. solidarity possessed the workers in casual fields, such as sheep-shearing or fruit-picking. The shearers were specially strong and militant and in 1894 broke out in insurrection in Queensland. 1912 saw a general strike in Brisbane over trade union rights and for six days the country-workers came out in support; 1915 saw a strike of the coal-miners in all states; 1917 saw linked-up strikes all over the continent against speed-up. The 1920's were dominated (partly through

¹ C. Lyne, *Life of Sir Henry Parkes*. The Federation movement was important as part of the unity-trend. Parkes, *Fifty Years in the Making of Aust. History* (1892).

I.W.W. influence) by the movement for 'One Big Union.'¹

5

Reformist period and culmination of monopoly, 1890 on. Rationalization and advanced technical methods now invaded the land. Irrigation ; Refrigeration. Grazing, dairy, orchard work took on a new importance ; superphosphates and dry farming brought new areas into wheat, the mallee of Victoria and S. Australia. 1893 saw the advent of Crisis. (Previously, there had been a land boom and crash in the 40's after the first rapid inflow of capital ; but the post-1850 expansion of capital in Europe had righted things.) The market was flooded with land-bills, many banks were crushed out, and there was a long depression.

Politically there resulted another campaign to settle a yeomanry. Legislation was passed to aid the small man and to break up the large estates (by buying back and subdividing, by taxing them so heavily that they broke up of their own accord). Irrigation schemes, schemes to convert the large pastoral estates to small dairy-farms, grazing, wheatland or orchards, schemes to settle returned soldiers—all failed on the solid resistance of banks and monopolies. Thus, 1901-1911, the population grew by 18 per cent—of that increase 36 per cent being in the pastoral area and only 4 per cent in the agricultural. The number of large estates grew. Some very large estates were broken up, but chicanery and tricks such as family-sharing nullified the legislation.

Now a glance at the legal bases of the landholding. The rapid growth of monopoly-forms in a virgin land, with the impetus of European developments behind them, produced

¹ I had the honour of knowing well some of the Wobblies who came to Australia after their persecution in U.S.A. (e.g. Jim Quinlan) ; in Australia they were framed and persecuted too, but left their mark. I have had no space in this article to go into the various theories, socialist, reformist, syndicalist, that have controlled the labour movements of Australia ; to discuss the anti-imperialist blind-alley of Lang ; the many magnificent episodes of struggle, etc.

a very simplified form of land-law. Owing to the work of Torrens and his registration system, which operated first in S. Australia in 1858, simple certificates of title took the place of deeds, and save for some 7 million acres held under the old commonlaw title, the Torrens method was applied to all landholdings. From Australia the method spread to Denmark and Norway, and to the U.S.A. (where the matter was complicated by the objection to legislature encroaching on the judiciary, so that primary registration was made by decree of court).¹

Another basic difference between Australian and U.S.A. developments lay in the attitude to the banks. In the U.S.A. till near the end of the nineteenth century banks were considered fit only to issue notes and discount bills. Restrictions prevented them from normal commercial expansion and they linked up with the trusts, which absorbed a large part of normal banking business. But in Australia there was little legal control. Loan by overdraft displaced bills of exchange, and begot fluidity of exchange at an early date.² The branch bank, hated in the U.S.A., was carried on from the Scotch example and made possible the huge inrush of British capital.

The Imperial Bank of Germany, in an annual report published during the (1914-18) war thought it worth while to boast of having devised a scheme by which a payment could be made by a person in one town to a person in another by a book entry and letter of advice, without the use of currency or a credit instrument. If there is a banker living in Australia who can remember the time when a proposition of this kind was a problem to be solved, he must be a very old man.³

¹ J. E. Hogg, *Aust. Torrens System, and Registration of Title to Land throughout the Empire*.

² The tendency to treat credit finance fluidly appears as early as the first crisis (1823-30) when the N.S.W. Council passed an Act "to give a preferable lien on wool from season to season, and to make mortgages of sheep, cattle, and horses valid without delivery to the mortgagee". The govnr. vetoed, but the woolmen kept on and soon got the right to borrow here on the sheep, there on the wool, there on freehold, etc.

³ *Aust. Encyclopedia* (1926), i, 123.

6

We see than that throughout Australian history there had been, despite the changing circumstances, a very simplified pattern of class-conflict—on the one hand a monopoly-trend centring round the control of the land by the wool-trade (one cattle run in N. Australia covers 11,000 sq. miles); on the other hand a strange fusion of pioneering independence with trade-union solidarity. Almost from the start, then, Australia showed the stark lines of class-demarcation which the capitalist system is only now, in its final phase of cartel and integrated industries, reaching elsewhere on the full world-scale. Here, one might say, is a revolutionary situation, and indeed it has been that revolutionary potential giving the dynamic to the scene. But because of the small part played by Australia in the capitalist whole, the very limited degree of industrialization, the elements of conflict could not move to any final conclusion.

Hence the way in which from the 1890's a kind of halt appeared. It was not regression. Productively there was expansion, but within the limits set by the struggle culminating about 1900. The mass-forces could chafe explosively, but make no new step. Until a much larger movement into industrialization set in, nothing more could be expected.¹ The 1914-18 war began that movement, and the big industrial monopoly arose in the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, linking mining and steel industries. It has remained for the present war to give the decisive push.

During the last war Australia sent men to Britain to make munitions; all ammunition came from Britain except rifle and .303 sizes, and only a few rifles and small-arms were made. Now Australia is producing armaments heavily

¹ I have no space to analyse the deadlock in detail, the way in which the alliance of British capital and the wool-monopolies (and cattle) obstructed the industrial development; the modifications expressed by the conflict of British and U.S.A. capital from 1900 on, etc.

and exporting to Britain, e.g. some 60-70 million rounds of ammunition in 1940; small-arms ammunition turned out by the end of 1941 was twenty-four more times than that in April, 1939, and was rapidly expanding. Industry has been producing naval equipment, A.A. guns, Bofors, Brens; made arrangements for cruiser tanks (from June, 1941). Optical instruments were being manufactured for all the services; steel-mills were meeting the demand for special types of steel. (The chief mills, those of the Broken Hill Prop. Co. at Newcastle, founded in 1915, were meeting all basic demands.) From the start of the war to mid-1941, 400,000 tons of steel were exported. Aircraft production is going on in a big way. Before May, 1941, the newspapers were printed on imported paper; from that date Tasmanian paper mills have provided the paper. Oil is being got in a sandstone valley some 140 miles from Sydney; in May, 1941, high-grade tetra-ethyl was pumped out in continuous stream. Most significant of all is the production of machine-tools, those keys to all modern industry. Before the war only five firms made them, and in a small way. Two years later 85 firms were turning out all types of machine tools and jigs up to the highest limit of accuracy.¹

But we are not concerned with what will come of this new turn, whereby Australia enters into the fully industrialized sphere. The country's peculiar character lies in the previous development.

7

In music, Australia has done next to nothing. In prose it has no great national tradition; only in the 1930's, as the continent confusedly moved out of its deadlock towards its present phase, does the novel appear as importantly embodying the national consciousness, and what has so

¹ *Anzacs into Battle*, T. Hole (1942).

far been done shows the first steps towards the new synthesis rather than any arresting achievement. It is in poetry and art that Australian culture, in the cycle we have sketched, found its key-forms.

First came the direct effort to carry on the accepted English forms—e.g. the verse of Wentworth, vigorous within a convention. The irruption of the new productive forces found expression in Kendall and Adam Lindsay Gordon—Kendal a diffused Keats uttering the sense of new renaissance-potences, Gordon trying to fuse the damn-all independence of spirit with the inherited verse-forms that suggested elemental release. Hence the importance of Swinburne at this phase. The Swinburnian influence came to a head in Boake, where it is wedded to realistic fury (he hanged himself in his stockwhip, after denouncing the Never-Never of the squatters).

As the popular movement widens and takes root, these elements coalesce in the art of Henry Lawson and Patterson. Patterson responded to the pioneer, the cocky, the determined selector (so that at one end he passes into acceptance of the squatter as part of the individualist world); but Lawson was a socialist, the singer of the common man in all his forms and attitudes. These two poets clashed, for the reasons indicated above. But though it is Lawson who must have the last word, Lawson who stands out as the great figure, using the Australian folk-song (the song of drover, shearer, tramp) with lyric art, there is a point of union between the work of the two.

At the same time, what we have called the renaissance-potences were finding a new point of concentration: in the sombre intellectual passion of Christopher Brennan's symbolist work (the awareness of the check merged with an elemental sense of the Australian essences), and in the light bright quickness of Hugh McCrae's songs and pictorial imagery. In the work of the *Vision* school (led

by Kenneth Slessor and myself) these developments were brought into a more conscious synthesis, but at the same time flagged against the barrier, the deadlock, which at the time we did not understand.

In art, the renaissance-potences overbrimmed richly. The loss of the land—a loss, remember, linked with a fierce democratic counter-struggle—brought about as in the English eighteenth century a very fine landscape school, of which the *pleinairiste* exponents, with a joyous lyrical undercurrent, were Streeton and Hans Heysen. In Gruner appeared great art, a vision of infinite lucidities of light, which in time broadened to a comprehension of the rhythms and colours of Australian distance, and mastered the mass-content of Australian forms. In Norman Lindsay a fantastic but very powerful utterance compressed all the powers and forms of the cycle under question in an art which with all its Rubensesque glorying in strong life belongs at root to the English Hogarthian tradition of character-draughtsmanship.

The relations here generalized could be demonstrated in detail. Perhaps enough has been said to give some notion of the main aspects of Australian culture, its limitations and achievements. What is yet to come will certainly bear in part the marks of this first cycle ; it will as certainly move into a very different series of problems and resolutions. We may confidently claim that the central works of the first cycle will maintain their value, not only in Australia, but also as a contribution to world-culture.

HENRY LAWSON, SOCIALIST AND POET

By JOHN MANIFOLD

I

THERE IS A nasty little by-product of imperialism which affects even Left critics in England—an attitude of bland ignorance or even more offensive condescension towards the colonial literatures. There is no justification for it. It is precisely to a revolutionary writer that the study of minority literatures is important.

In the colonial countries the oppressor at least does not underrate literature, but does his best to destroy it. In Australia, schools and universities cannot or will not teach Australian literature. And in revenge literature goes out and gets a better audience among those with whom the writer is proud to share a language, a great hatred, and a revolutionary tradition.

II

Between 1848 and 1852, the population of Australia trebled itself. To the heroic remnant of half the revolutions of 1848, Garibaldi's men and Kossuth's Chartists and Irish rebels, Australia seemed to offer a refuge. They came with the gold-rush.

They found military dictatorship, police-law, harrying and surveillance of the diggings by mounted troopers which made life intolerable. A miner was found murdered and the police were suspected of it. With axes, pikes, and a few old muskets, the diggers rose.

Other districts were slow to follow the lead, and the First Republic died bloodily and hard at Eureka Stockade. But the government was scared into granting reforms. The diggers became national heroes, and gradually the mass national movement formed.

Into such surroundings, on the Grenfell goldfield, Henry Larsen or Lawson was born of Norwegian and gipsy parents in 1867. He was a socialist before his twenties. He came to Sydney to work as a coach-painter, but he had a hungry mind that wanted wide feeding. He chucked his job and began working his way all over the country.

His first book was a success; he even impressed the bourgeois critics. Book after book consolidated his hold on an enormous audience. Success never changed him, for he spent what he got and went back to "humping his bluey" over the outback. Nor did his politics change; but no bourgeois publisher could disregard his popularity, and he was published and read.

Then came the war of 1914. It must have seemed to him that all he had fought for was betrayed. Socialism was a lost cause or a sold one. He was deaf and his strength was spent. Public opinion was pumped up against his "immorality". Though he lived until 1924, his life was over. Recently the council of his home town vetoed a proposal to raise a statue to him. The bourgeoisie had won again; such was their revenge.

III

He knew the land. He lived and worked and wrote and sang or declaimed *firstly* among the workers and farmers of the back-blocks, writing—like Burns—in the common speech of his class and country, and taking his forms from folk-song and tradition. Also like Burns, when he tries "correct" English he is weak or melodramatic. He is best when nearest the impersonality of folk-song as in the "Andy" ballads, and worst when he is being "heroic" and prophetic. There are perhaps a dozen songs and ballads on the high level of "Andy", in all of which he uses folk-song metres with perfect effect:

*O Andy's gone with cattle now,
Our hearts are out of order;
With drought he's gone to battle now
Across the Queensland border.
He's left us in dejection now,
Our thoughts with him are roving;
It's dull on this selection now
Since Andy went a-droving.*

For a general-purpose non-lyric line he often used the traditional trochaic eight-footer, to which he gave suppleness by freely shifting the *cæsura*—as in their languages Pushkin and Hugo did. When he is “just taking” and forgets to be self-conscious he can rival any bourgeois poet in satire or epistle and had a pleasant touch in parody.

In narrative he is not in the very first class, for in an endeavour to “make poetry” out of a story he often veers into unnatural literary English. Even “Eureka” is not free of this. Perhaps a sense that such a poem could not be written in English and that Australian was not yet equal to it may account for its being left unfinished. While there is no temptation to be literary, in the humorous ballads like “Mabel Claire” he brings it off in triumph.

His prose is excellent; light-moving, quick on the tongue, vivid and full of hard-grained memorable turns of speech. He stands hardly below Balzac in the cumulative cross-section of society that he gives, and his characters are wonderfully alive and actual, even down to very minor bystanders and commentators. They drift through four or five short stories, appear in a ballad or two and get a line apiece in “The Last Review”, and there they are—you’ve known them all your life.

“Influences” are almost unspottable in him. He knew Shakespeare, Burns, Bret Harte, and Dickens among the foreign writers, and had a good working knowledge of Australian poets; he mentions by name Kendall and Gordon. But he is no subject for the analyst who boils all

literature down to the personal influence of one writer on another. In fact, he would probably deny that he wrote "literature".

I would draw attention to his power and lighthandedness in *humour* if I were not (as I am) certain of being misinterpreted. Talk to an Englishman about humour and you'll end by knifing him, as like as not. Yes, "The Loaded Dog" (for instance) is "funny ha-ha!" but Lawson's own particular brand of humour is best seen in "The Union Buries its Dead", a sardonic humour closely allied to that profound melancholy which five generations of oppression has bred into us and which runs like a trickle of blood through Australian literature. It's the inferiority complex which also produces "colonial toughness".

All through his verse and prose one feels his pugnacious faith in humanity, in the goodness and decency of the common man when the system will allow him to be; and perpetually recurs the image of the miners of Eureka Stockade, symbols and forerunners of a worker's republic:

*The flutter of the crimson flag
Above the golden holes...*

The bravest hearts of twenty lands...

He is a realist from beginning to end; crying not for the moon but for irrigation, education, and worker's control. And he is not gentle with those who use their imagination *instead* of their eyes. It was this stubborn realism of his that provoked one of the finest stand-up literary dogfights that the world has seen since Dryden took the pants off Shadwell.

IV

Hardly less gifted as a poet—except perhaps in intelligence and generosity—Banjo Patterson also claimed to speak for Australia. What Lawson's verse was to the small farmers and workers, Patterson's was to the bour-

geoisie and gentry : it expresses the desires and feelings of his class. Patterson filled the gentry's bill exactly. He posed as the bluff up-country chap who was genuine British-Australian and none of this foreign-agitator nonsense. He glorified the squatter and affected to despise the town (including the town working-class); he sang of horse-racing and hunting, and turned the toiling, suffering, drought-ruined farmer into a figure of fun. Finally he called Lawson "Mr. Townsman" and the fight was on :

*"So you're back from up the country, Mister Townsman, where you went,
And you're cursing at the business in a bitter discontent . . .
No doubt you're better suited drinking lemon-squash in town . . .
The bush hath moods and changes as the seasons rise and fall,
And the men who know the bush-land, they are loyal through it all."*

Lawson :

*"It was pleasant up the country, City Bushman, where you went,
For you sought the greener patches and you travelled like a gent . . .
True, the bush 'hath moods and changes' and the Bushman 'hath'
'em too*

*For he's not a poet's dummy—he's a man, the same as you ;
But his back is growing rounder, slaving for the absentee,
And his toiling wife is thinner than a country wife should be,
And in short I think the bushman's being driven to the wall,
And it's doubtful if his spirit will be loyal through it all'.
'Droving songs are very pretty but they call for little thanks
From the people of a country whose possessors are the Banks . . .
Ah, we read about the drovers and the shearers and the like
Till we wonder why such happy and romantic fellows strike !'"*

In the same series is the vivid and furious couplet :

*"Sort of British Workman nonsense that shall perish in the scorn
Of the drover who is driven and the shearer who is shorn."*

To Banjo's comfortable rhetoric about "open air country life", Lawson replies :

*"Did you ever guard the cattle when the night was inky black
And it rained, and icy water trickled gently down your back,
Till your saddle-weary backbone started aching at the roots
And you almost felt the croaking of the bull-frog in your boots ?
Did you shiver in the saddle, curse the restless stock and cough
Till a squatter's bloody dummy cantered up to warn you off?"*

Nor was the tension eased when Lawson published a ludicrous poem in parody of Patterson's race-course epics :
" *An' Mc.Durmer shouted loudly, Put yer tongue out, put yer tongue out !* "

An' the Screamer put his tongue out an' he won by half-a-tongue ! "

It was more than a personal quarrel which might have been healed. (Lawson put out a tentative hand at the end of "The City Bushman" but was lucky not to get it sliced off at the wrist, the way Banjo reacted.) It went deeper than personal quarrels. It was class-war on the literary front : socialist realism against bourgeois romanticism.

I have given the matter more space than it may seem to deserve, but for these reasons : both men produced some of their best verse in the course of the fight, and both knew and felt what they demanded of their art and their country.

V

Perhaps Lawson worked under easier conditions than any English worker-writer does now : not that he got more to eat or more leisure to write, but his audience was waiting for him. He worked in a known tradition, in the idiom of folk-song and ballad and the prose of the bush story-teller. The contributory factor of nationalism was on his side.

All the same, we have a hell of a lot to learn from him. We can avoid his mistakes, and do what we can to translate his excellence into contemporary terms. English writers have all his work ahead of them in creating a *style*, or better, a language. It's an essential job. Maybe some day a real critic will point out his merit better than I can.

Meanwhile, instead of talking so much about proletarian literature, why don't we read what there is of it. Lawson is more than an Australian outback poet. He is world-size, and he's ours.

TWO BOOKS ON NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND: A WORKING DEMOCRACY.

WALTER NASH. Dent. 8s. 6d.

THIS IS AN important book for two chief reasons. The more obvious is that it provides a detailed account of what has been done in peacetime and what is being done now by a country most Englishmen know little about. But New Zealand has had the flattering reputation among us of being a kind of fairy-land on the outskirts of the world, "wonderful climate, y'know," "sound democratic government," and so on. Then we have turned to more important matters, not suspecting that the inhabitants of this furthest-flung Utopia might have something important to teach the rest of the world.

That, of course, is the justification of Mr. Nash's well-documented book, and the second reason for its immediate consequence to all of us. There could not have been a better choice for presenting New Zealand's "creed" than Walter Nash, Finance Minister in the first N.Z. Labour Government since 1935 and since then, as Minister of Social Security, responsible for the Social Security Act of 1938—Beveridge hot and strong, apparently, and praised by Sir William in his famous Report. I think the details Mr. Nash gives of New Zealand's social services will find greater interest among us cynical "Britons" (to use the shredded Beaverbrook term) than the chapters on the Five Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. Not because we don't believe in them, but because we are more accustomed to find these fine phrases cheek-by-jowl with gloomy prognostications about the impossibility of realizing them. What Mr. Nash takes in his stride concerning the lessons of the war :

New Zealanders have learnt in this war the amazing productive possibilities of the country. It will be useless to persuade them that goods enough for everybody cannot be produced in time of peace . . .

we have to struggle through, against the muddy (repeat muddy) prophecies of M'Lords Kemsley and Rothermere.

I don't think Mr. Nash quite realizes how fortunate his country has been. This is not to sneer at the pioneering toil which in a little over a century changed "a rugged wilderness into one of the most productive and prosperous areas on the face of the globe"; but it is to point out that the democratic tendencies of the pioneers were fostered by their struggle being based chiefly on agriculture, not on gold or diamonds or petroleum, which might have attracted less desirable elements even across those wide ocean spaces. And the fact that the original inhabitants were attractive and of small number, combined with this absence of a slave-motive to lead inevitably, with a setback or two last century, to the happy present, when the Maori "is now accepted as a full equal, socially and politically, is trusted, respected, and admired by his fellow (white) New Zealanders". Colonial (white) papers, please copy.

R. C. CHURCHILL

LITERATURE AND AUTHORSHIP IN NEW
ZEALAND. ALAN MULGAN. P.E.N. Books. Allen
and Unwin. 2s.

I CONFESS THAT the full extent of my knowledge of New Zealand literature before I read Mr. Mulgan's little book was that Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* owed its setting to its author's memories of a New Zealand sheep-run in the 'sixties, and that Katherine Mansfield was born in these islands twenty-five years later. It is by no means a reflection upon the author's talents that I now carry away so confused an impression and that I have not many more names to add to these two. For it would have been so easy for Mr. Mulgan to have turned his many "graceful poets" and "competent novelists" into the antipodal equivalents of a W. B. Yeats or a Henry James. The sanity and

perspective of Mr. Mulgan's outlook prevent any such facile patriotism, and if the average ignorant Britisher should be left with the notion of a rather dull literary past, certainly Mr. Mulgan gives ample reason for it.

That will be found, I think, the most valuable part of the book: the section on "the position of the author in New Zealand". The small reading public, the lure of America or Britain, the dependence of the newspapers on London and New York: all these still make the New Zealand writer's position difficult in the extreme, even now that he is no longer "at heart English, Scottish, Welsh, or Irish" and no longer thinks "in terms of April spring and snowy Christmases". But Mr. Mulgan ends, justifiably, on a note of optimism, quoting the words of Froude about "the unexhausted soil and spiritual capabilities of New Zealand". Not to believe in the future of a country which has produced in a hundred years' existence such people as Mansfield, Low, Rutherford, and Truby King would be to view it through most infra-rosy spectacles.

R. C. CHURCHILL

THREE POEMS

TO SOME BRITISH OFFICERS

HANDLE my nationality with care :
I give you warning it is not your pidgin.
Speak of it as you speak of a religion
Of someone else's, one you do not share.

Do not presume too much on being human
And having roughly the same eyes and hair :
Handle my nationality with care
And do not introduce me to your women.

Nor do I wish your interest in the matter,
Of that and silence I prefer the latter,
There is no ground on which to join our ranks.

If I fight for you, that is my affair
And does not need the insult of your thanks.
Handle my nationality with care.

JOHN MANIFOLD

THE DESERTER

BORN with all arms, he sought a separate peace.
Responsibilities loomed up like tanks,
And since his manhood marked him of our ranks
He threw it off and scrambled for release.

His power of choice he thrust on the police
As if it burnt his hands ; he gave the banks
His power to work ; then he bestowed with thanks
His power to think on Viscount Candlegrease.

Claiming the privileges of the dead
Before his time—the heart no blood runs through,
The undelighted hands, the rotting head—

Strong in his impotence he can safely view
The battlefield of men, and shake his head
And say, "I know. But then what can I do?"

JOHN MANIFOLD

FOR THE MERCENARIES

FORGET your regions for a Touareg country
That has no function but to floor a tent,
That has all roads for its indifferent entry
And borders always further on in front.

Forget and do your duty—to suppress
The young and evil for the old and rotten.
Do not demand, do not expect, do not
Utter your heart. That is the only lesson.

There is a lot to lose: we must be rid
Of our allegiance—we are not for either;
Of our expectance—it will only wither;

Of sympathy—each instant takes its tithe.
Let your achievement be your only myth,
And kill with nothing but a craftsman's pride.

JOHN MANIFOLD

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE POWER HOUSE. ALEX COMFORT. Routledge.
10s. 6d.

MR. ALEX COMFORT'S third novel, *The Power House*, is on a much grander scale than either of its predecessors. In a small French town on the Channel coast a number of men and women are employed in a weaving mill. One of them commits a murder, and almost simultaneously the War breaks out. Mr. Comfort's second group is a battery in which we find several of the mill-hands, including the murderer; the German invasion overwhelms them almost before they are aware. In the final section such of the weavers as survive are back in the mill, now German-controlled. There is an insurrection among the workers, resulting in damage to the mill; English aircraft complete its destruction.

On the surface, Mr. Comfort's treatment of his theme is unflinchingly realistic. There is a tremendous aggregation of detail, some of it very technical, all observed with extreme vividness. Absorption in detail tends to de-personalize a book; and it is not perhaps a complete answer to say that Mr. Comfort's purpose is to show how the machine age and its supreme manifestation, total war, have reduced the value of individuality.

Against this vast, sombre, and chaotic background, a few figures stand out. Fougueux and his friend Loubain among the workers, Vernier and Valtin among the intellectuals; while Ritter is the spokesman of the German New Order. We remember them by some physical or mental peculiarity rather than as complete personalities—Fougueux because he, adoring his engine and being the moving spirit in the power-house, is for a time sexually impotent (and a symbol, we may suppose, of man's helplessness before the machine); Valtin for his theory of man's collective

insanity, with its corollary of "the world to the weak". "By participating in an organized movement one forfeits one's sanity," he says. But I think he confuses sanity with reason: the words, though often used interchangeably, have very different meanings.

Nobly conceived and executed with unfailing mastery, *The Power House* makes much contemporary fiction seem feeble and insincere. Mr. Comfort is a lover of humanity and one of the few writers to look at the war as the historian may one day look at it. He demonstrates superbly the danger of collectivism to the human spirit. But as a work of art his book loses something from his preoccupation with the concrete and the abstract. Between these two opposites human nature, the novelist's true material, tends to be squeezed out—just as it is being squeezed out, one must admit, by the competing collectivisms of to-day.

L. P. HARTLEY

THE HEART CONSUMED. FRANCIS ASKHAM. The Bodley Head. 8s. 6d.

WITH A TWO-FOLD instinct of escapism Mr. Francis Askham first takes us back, then forward, a hundred years. A hundred years ago Robert Devenish was living with his parents in a typically Victorian house in a London square. Hardly more than a boy, he is already enslaved by beauty. He finds it in his country home, in Bessy the maid, in Lily Convally who teaches him French. Desperate at the news that Lily has eloped with his tutor, he falls downstairs and kills himself.

Few stories have had a more dramatic opening or a more unexpected sequel. Robert lingers on, a ghost, into the twenty-first century and there finds Amalia, the enhanced and perfected image of his beloved Lily. In the guise of a transparent black dog he tries to protect her from Bellamus, the superman who loves her to the point of

attempted strangulation ; but he can do little but haunt the square where he lived and watch Bellamus's efforts to re-mould the world. " We are dying out, Amalia. Man's greatest enemies are the disturbances, the toxins he stirs up in his own mind. I want fine, unthinking male animals, strong and lusty. . . . The girls will be taught housecraft and mothercraft and gentle accomplishments." Will Bellamus be able to bring it off ? Robert waits and watches, while events, some commonplace, some fantastic, stream by him with dreamlike inconsequence.

No other novel that I have read has quite the flavour of *The Heart Consumed*—the flavours, I should say, having regard to the contrast between the Victorian prelude, all heart and sensibility, and the future with its stimulating, unsatisfying amalgam of nerves, brains and sexuality. Mr. Askham's vision of the future is more entertaining but not more inviting, than most others ; but his evocation of the 1840's was to me almost unbearably nostalgic. The distinction of this first novel argues great possibilities for the author ; and I hope that in his next he will give his romantic imagination full play.

L. P. HARTLEY

THE BLACK VENUS. RHYS DAVIES. Heinemann.
8s. 6d.

MARRIAGE WAS NOT to be entered on lightly in rural Wales, and for that reason the custom of courting in bed was held to provide the young with the best means of testing each others' seriousness of intention and sweetness of nature. Be it remembered that privacy is hard to come by in country communities and " caru yn y gwly " provided this, with less risk of pneumonia than the discomfort of fields and hedges ; indeed the reverse. But the custom could be abused, and when Olwen Powell, the young heiress of

ROBERT BRIDGES, 1844-1930**by Edward Thompson****7s. 6d. net (*shortly*)**

In his Preface the author writes :—"In October, 1944, it will be a century since Robert Bridges was born. . . . The time seems ripe for an attempt to assess his work and to gather up some of Oxford's rich oral tradition concerning him. . . . I have tried to keep enough of my memories of him to convey a little of the vivid impression he made. Some personal detail is justified, I feel, in the case of a poet so great and a man so loved and admired. . . ."

**THE NOTE-BOOKS AND PAPERS
OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS****(whose centenary, too, falls this year)****Edited by Humphry House****25s. net**

" . . . This volume intensifies the impression made by Hopkins's letters published some time ago; that of an inner passion which can be paralleled among modern writers only in the letters of Keats. . . ."—*Scotsman*

**ENGLISH LITERATURE :
MODERN 1450-1939****By G. H. Mair**

A new edition, with an Epilogue, 1914-1939, by A. C. Ward
(Home University Library)

3s. 6d. net

"It is work fit to give not only solid knowledge, but inspiration. . . ."—*Time and Tide*

**THE LETTERS OF GEORGE
GORDON 1902-1942****10s. 6d. net**

" . . . A rare companion. . . . His character, his admirable nature, his firm mind, his warm heart, are legible in every line. . . ."—*Sunday Times*

Oxford University Press

Ty Rhosyn farm, had received but rejected as well no less than seven suitors, the deacons of Ayron decided that the time had come to bring her to book.

"Oysters we are not," they declared : tongues had been given us to be used, and the matter of Miss Powell's impropriety must be given an airing. The fair name of Ayron, of Wales, and of chapel (versus church) were at stake, and incidentally Miss Powell's own name must be given a chance to be cleared. Olwen agreed but, to the deacons' surprise, confessed to no sense that she stood in need of clearing.

She had, she said, no intention of limiting her choice to seven young men. She would continue until seventy had been weighed, and, if necessary, found wanting. Men, she told the deacons, were "vain, spoilt, and bumptious bosses" and she proposed to go on testing them in the time-honoured way. The other girls of the village should be grateful not jealous, for did she not send them her rejected suitors "less clumsy and better-mannered" than they had been? As to the taking of liberties, the deft placing of a bolster and a hair-prong under the pillow took care of that.

So Olwen continued until fifteen had come courting under the parental roof, and such is Mr. Rhys Davies's skill that the number does not seem excessive. With extreme delicacy, he combines observance of the proprieties with shrewd comment on human nature at large, country people in particular, and Welsh in detail. His story abounds in wit which never degenerates into farce and in the character of Olwen, spokesman for the new woman at the start of this century, he discovers a pathos which is the more moving for the sly satire from which it stands out. The easy unaffected grace of his prose is a further delight in these days when good writing is so little practised.

R. H.

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

Hero or Fool?

A Study of Milton's Satan

G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON

Is the great rebel of *Paradise Lost* a hero or a fool? Mr. Hamilton, following the text closely and with keen analysis, "cannot find so despicable a satan," but a satan "whose greatness is felt and proved upon the imagination." *P.E.N. Book.* 2s. net

God's Trombones

Some Negro Sermons in Verse

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

"Mr. Johnson is a negro poet . . . his experiment is interesting and, at moments, really beautiful."—*New Statesman.*
2nd impression. 5s. net

Bugle Blast

A Further Anthology from the Services

Edited by JACK AISTROP *and* REGINALD MOORE

"An anthology which everyone should read; it gives a wide and varied picture of life in the Services in time of war."—*Listener.*
2nd impression. 6s. net

Nettles and Docks

NANCY PRICE

Introduction by NORMAN BIRKETT

"The mind of a wonderful woman is laid open in this book, which is a tonic and a delight, something to dip into when the spirit is deadened."—*Queen.* *Illustrated.* 2nd impression. 7s. 6d. net

40 MUSEUM STREET • LONDON • W.C.1

BRITISH WOODLAND TREES. H. L. EDLIN. Illustrated. Batsford. 12s. 6d.

HOW MANY OF us can name thirty British trees, excluding ornamental shrubs, which we could recognize at any season of the year? And how many wanting to lay in a stock of firewood for winter, to build a durable timber fence, or to plant shade-trees in a small garden would know which sort to choose? As one who hopes, after the war, to require some little of this practical knowledge—and who has intended always to acquire wider nodding acquaintance in the woods I especially welcome this book. It makes of learning both a pleasure and temptation.

The author, a graduate in forestry, writes primarily for professional foresters and field naturalists, but he has presented his material in a way that will readily appeal to the lay public. Two hundred species of trees, native to or planted commercially in British woods and parklands, are described at every season of the year and at each stage of growth. Methods of raising from seed or cuttings, proper siting and treatment, the appearance and past and present use of the timber are expertly discussed. Many notes of general interest—on the investment value of oak, the tallest tree growing in Britain, edible fruits of the different species, a living relic of the world's prehistoric flora—follow the technical items of identification, culture, and individual properties. Supplementary keys make for simplified recognition either by buds and twigs in winter, leaves and flowers in summer, or by fruits, seeds, and bark.

But, perhaps best of all where the layman is concerned, are the superb drawings and photographs. What a different it makes to see trees against their natural background, spruces growing in the snowclad Scottish highlands, junipers on a fellside above Grasmere, an avenue of beeches in Nidderdale or of limes in East Lothian,

The Debt

Formations of the R.A.F. in great strength crossed the coast last night to attack military objectives . . . mines were laid in enemy waters . . . nineteen bombers and seven fighters did not return.

The bulletin ends : imagination begins.

Those splendid lives, their loves, their hopes, their dreams, their years-to-be so freely risked, so freely lost, for our security.

You know the debt is unrepayable, but let your cheque book help the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund to go on caring for widow and orphan and hard hit dependents, rebuilding the future where no future seems to be. Never was its work so vital.

ROYAL AIR FORCE BENEVOLENT FUND

Please send donations to

LORD RIVERDALE, *Chairman*, or BERTRAM T. RUMBLE,
Hon. Sec., Appeals Committee, R.A.F. Benevolent Fund,
1 Sloane Street, London, S.W. 1. Cheques and P.O.
payable to R.A.F. Benevolent Fund.

(Registered under War Charities Act, 1940)

planes and willows among the daffodils in Regent's Park ! These fourscore photographs and the thirty-two plates showing structural details of foliage, flowers, and fruit, provide a pageant of the whole varied beauty of the British woodland scene.

Given such generous illustration and so much palatable information, it may seem churlish to ask for more. But, in a future edition, might there not be one chapter on the history of British forests and on enthusiasts like William Gilpin, vicar of Boldre in the New Forest, who awakened early appreciation of a fine national heritage ?

ALAN WALBANK

THE DEVICE OF GOVERNMENT : An Essay on Civil Polity. JOHN LAIRD. Cambridge University Press. 6s. "BEING VERY AMBITIOUS," says Professor Laird of this book, "I tried to make it short"; and certainly he has got through, and even more admirably got across, an amazing amount of work in his 170 pages. It is notorious that a book with much padding is easier to review shortly than a book like this, "compact and pithy" as the publishers justifiably call it; and it is not for lack of ambition on the reviewer's part, but rather through editorial astringency of space, that I cannot give Dr. Laird's book the detailed attention it so obviously demands.

"Popular philosophy," yes; but not by any means for a lazy reader, as I found to my shame when first tackling it in a careless mood; many readers will no doubt be put off, as I was at first, by that "it all depends what you mean by . . ." for which Dr. Joad, in a recent *Radio Times*, says he has been most unmercifully ragged. "Let us examine the force of the preposition . . .," "summing up the discussion of this chapter . . .": many readers will no doubt share my first impression that such dull work as this is only made permissible by Dr. Laird's occasional vividness

One King

A SURVEY OF THE DOMINIONS AND COLONIES
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, BY

DEREK TANGYE

A book for the instruction and entertainment of every responsible member of the Commonwealth, and one (it has an Index) that should have a prominent place on the reference shelf. *Portraits and Maps.* 12s. 6d. net

Before the Tide Turned

LIEUT.-COMMDR. HUGH HODGKINSON

The personal experiences of a destroyer officer in the Mediterranean, 1941, the lean year, when our enemies pressed hard and our strength was low. *Drawings by Lieut-Commander PETER THORNHILL* 10s. 6d. net

The U.S.S.R.

JAMES S. GREGORY AND D. W. SHAVE

A geographical survey with tables and indexes providing much statistical and general information.

Maps. 21s. net

BRITAIN'S HOME GUARD

A character study of Britain's Civilian Army by

JOHN BROPHY

with nineteen portraits in full colour by

ERIC KENNINGTON

READY IN THE NEW YEAR.

6s. NET

HARRAP BOOKS

of phrase : " Except for wet-nursing, there are few employments which are exclusively women's . . .," " sops and bribes to the venial, propaganda deliberately aimed below the intellectual belt . . .," " your Chuffeys may enjoy every minute spent upon the books of the Chuzzlewit firm. . . ." But, while applauding such eloquence, we shall be mistaken if we judge this book on any switchback principle ; it is more like a moving staircase, bringing us up, in reluctant admiration of the hidden power, from the stuffy twilight atmosphere of " it all depends " to the clear light of day, where, like Mrs. Snagsby, we " see it all ".

What we chiefly see, stepping off the staircase with the proper foot, is the platform of democracy. And the method should appeal to those members of the Forces who recently had the privilege of hearing the Aberdeen Professor in person, for it is also the method of their textbooks—" the best defence is attack." The case against democracy is put rather better than any of its opponents could put it, and is found wanting not by supernatural standards but by natural ones. It may depend, I allow, on what you *mean* by " natural ", but Dr. Laird has answered that one in his first thirty pages, now more than a hundred steps below us, as we await our post-war train.

R. C. CHURCHILL

HAZLITT IN THE WORKSHOP: THE MANUSCRIPT OF *THE FIGHT*. Transcribed, with Collation, Notes, and Commentary, by STEWART C. WILCOX.

John Hopkins Press ; London : H. Milford. 9s. 6d.

DESPITE ITS IMPERFECTIONS this is a valuable little book, for it shows a first-rate piece of literature in the making. It allows us to see (and in Hazlitt's case the opportunity is nowhere else afforded) writing as a craft as well as an art : the first fluent draft of *The Fight*, the many improvements of word and phrase even as he composed (or at least in the



*“Always
get over
a Stile”*

*was the excellent
advice given by
Richard Jefferies, the naturalist whose books
should be in every rucksack . . . Not that
he was foolhardy: discretion suggests that
something ought to depend upon the welcome
on the other side . . . Never pass a Bookshop
—there are no Bulls there; Trespassers will
not be prosecuted; you will be welcome . . .
Once in, just wave your hand and say
“Don’t mind me; I’m Browsing.” The
world’s best company on silent shelves expects
you. You alone can make them talk.
Do come in.*

ISSUED BY BOOK TOKENS LIMITED

very short interval before his copy went to the printer), and the deletion from this particular essay of the long digressions which he permitted himself in so many others. Under these heads the Editor writes helpfully if somewhat prolixly. He supplies plentiful evidence as to Hazlitt's well-known methods of composition and revision, assembles a useful list of the more striking verbal changes, and demonstrates that the deletions (all of which tell of Hazlitt's unhappy affair with Sarah Walker) were a few months later incorporated with little change in the *Liber Amoris*. The importance of all this needs no demonstration.

The MS. consists of 33 leaves of Hazlitt's handwriting (some two-thirds of the original draft) now preserved in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. But unfortunately Mr. Wilcox's treatment of this treasure is not what it should be; nor did the veritable senate, whose "invaluable advice" and "helpful comment, regarding its presentation" are gratefully acknowledged in the Preface, advise against insufficiency. Thus, there are at least seven interesting examples of "over-writing" mentioned in the Notes (there are, of course, many others of little or no significance, slips of the pen, and the like), but even a brief check shows that Mr. Wilcox has no fixed principle for dealing with them. Sometimes he adopts the over-writing because it makes sense (35, 3; 37, 14); sometimes he rejects the over-writing for the same reason (25, 11; 30, 14, incorrectly given as 30, 15). In another instance (39, 4) there is no difficulty, Hazlitt began to write "appalling" and changed to "terrific". There remain two instances in which both the over-writing and what it over-wrote make entire sense. In one of these (11, 19) he rejects the over-writing "felt" and keeps "argued", presumably because "argued" is in the *New Monthly* version; in the other (40, 17) he keeps the over-writing "Aye" and rejects "Ah" although "Ah" is in the *New Monthly*

TRANSFORMATION 2

Edited by STEFAN SCHIMANSKI and HENRY TREECE

"*Transformation Two* is an important volume for my readers. Here was something that I had long been looking for, a collection of essays by writers . . . who all believe in the individual personality and their purpose is to see how that personality can be maintained and society at the same time adequately served. The range of their topics and their treatment is admirable."

B. IFOR EVANS (*John O' London's*).

8s. 6d.

A MAP OF HEARTS

A Collection of Short Stories (now out of print but reprinting)

Edited by STEFAN SCHIMANSKI and HENRY TREECE

The book is divided into three sections, stories of the war, imaginative sketches and tales of conscience. The writers include William Sansom, Mulk Raj Anand, J. F. Hendry, John Pudney, Inez Holden, Gwyn Jones, and fifteen others.

Wrapper designed by Henry Moore.

8s. 6d.

Lindsay Drummond Ltd., 6 Buckingham St., W.C.2

GREY WALLS

The Wounds of the Apostles

Poems by Fred Marnau 7/6

The Gates of Silence

Poems by Wrey Gardiner 6/-

The Light in the Dust

Novel by Willy Goldman 7/6

GREY WALLS

version. Where then are we? For to put it bluntly, though I hope not offensively, our concern is with Hazlitt's decisions and not the transcriber's. A second point: the normal number of lines on a page of the MS. is 20. There are a few 19's and a few 21's which arouse no curiosity. But what of folios 25 (22 lines), 30 (23), 40 (22), and 41 (23)? Folio 41 is reproduced by photostatic process as a frontispiece, and it seems certain as such deductions can be from a photostat that the extra three lines are an afterthought squeezed in at the head of the page. Judge their importance for a study of Hazlitt's workmanship: "The carrier-pigeons now mounted [*flew* struck out] into the air & one of them flew with the news of her husband's victory to the bosom of Mrs. Neat. Alas! for Mrs. Hickman!..." If Cribb's comment at the foot of folio 40 is similarly squeezed in, what an inspired afterthought it all was! But Mr. Wilcox cannot help, and from Alaska to Galveston conscientious reviewers are visiting New York to resolve their doubts.

Again, we should welcome a fuller description of the MS. (its size? its binding?), and it seems advisable to check the line references in the Notes. One error has been corrected above; on page 57 line 7 those interested may find another.

GWYN JONES

HOW TO STUDY AN OLD CHURCH. A. NEEDHAM. Batsford. 6s.

THIS EASILY CARRIED book is a great help for anyone stranded in an English village. It may start a lifetime pursuit—for all weathers and localities—it is living history in wood and stone and metal and glass.

There is a dismal feeling to-day that England may sink into a museum piece, and have an export of whimsey. Not on your life! We are all longing for a community of

Shorter Stories

SIR A. T.

QUILLER-COUCH

The making of this selection of his short stories was one of Q's last tasks. 8/6 net

2 'Everyman's'**EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.**

By Somerville and Ross
No. 978

THE MOONSTONE

No. 979
By Wilkie Collins
Intro. by Dorothy L. Sayers
Each 3/- net

Brenva

T. GRAHAM BROWN

An account of the three ascents of the Brenva face of Mont Blanc by routes discovered by the author, two with Frank Smythe and one with Alexander Graven. *Ninety-six pages of photographs.* 25/- net

New Poetry**STORMY HARVEST**

by Stanley Snaith

THE AXE IN THE WOOD

by Clifford Dymont

SMOKE AFTER FLAME

by Hal Summers

3/6 net each

DENT

TO KEEP ABREAST WITH TO-DAY'S BOOKS, COME TO

**B
O
O
K
S****LONDON'S BRIGHTEST BOOKSHOP**

You can ALWAYS see them in profusion here.

Engravers and Diestampers; Exclusive Notepapers; Visiting Cards
for Official and Professional use engraved promptly and accurately.

Only a few minutes from Piccadilly.

TRUSLOVE & HANSON

14a CLIFFORD STREET (New Bond Street), W.1.

**B
O
O
K
S****WANTED MODERN BOOKS**

CHILDREN'S
ENCYCLOPAEDIA

(10 Vols.)

ENCYCLOPAEDIA
BRITANNICA

(14th Edition)

SETS, etc.**HIGH PRICES PAID****ROBERT CHRIS, 8 Cecil Court, LONDON, W.C.2**

TEMPLE BAR 6700

Nations. Here, in our old Parish life, we see the germ of such a community. Here was one strong building, the Church Tower, of stone, with arrangements for shooting, for signalling, for storing weapons. The yard was used for Home Guard practice, and the Yew-tree provided wood for bows and arrows (ordered by Edward I for this express purpose—a point the author has missed). In the vestry was the Bank—a strong box, with three keys, for holding the main store of money, deeds, and treasure belonging to the parishioners. The Nave was used for holy feasts, which were full of enjoyment, and special “Church Ales” in aid of a girl about to be married or a lad about to emigrate. The ale, by the way, was brewed on the premises. Business transactions were made in the nave in full congregation, for no trading was thought unholy. There were simple and quick methods of dealing with disturbers of the peace. By the way, it is a pity the “brang” has gone out of use, though one is sorry for the stout fellow who had to work it.

In such a book as this we feel the English genius for working together and achieving security and enjoyment for everyone. Surely the readiness is all, and the same same spirit can operate in the larger world.

High praise is due for all the illustrations, the index, and the interesting notes. We wish some smaller details had been omitted to afford more space for the screen—that people’s altar so full of history. May the book have a wide circulation, if only to stop the illiterate confusion of *aisle* with *nave*. Brides are used to going down an aisle, but the King will be doing it soon, if the Press is not put right.

M. V. HUGHES

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

DECEMBER

EDITORIAL

1944

HUMANITY HAS ACHIEVED this winter the ability to celebrate its fifth successive Christmas of increasing woe, wounds, wastefulness, and want. This in itself is sufficiently unpleasant to have given pleasure, one would have thought, to even so perverted a masochist as Man. But in truth, there are few signs of pleasure on earth. In Germany, since defeat is inevitable, the *Stimmung* is less than of yore; with us, there would be more gaiety in our greetings were victory not still a "long way off". The long long trail goes a-winding, not with decent directness into the land of our dreams, but uphill, through fire and brimstone, through that famous wood whose trees defy its detection, thorough field, thorough briar, blood, sand, and all the other obstacles we are so obediently used to being called on to exult in.

If the war ends before our memories do, we shall recall that this was a time when we were expected to enjoy having no fruit, eggs, or fish; when we patted ourselves on the back for being bombed; cheered when the milk-ration was cut, and positively threw our hats in the air when our controlled-price Algerian wine vanished, in order that caterers might sell it at any price and under almost any name. If our children ask us why we permitted such a state of affairs we shall reply, "Because there were quite enough of all these to go round, but so that some shouldn't have too much and others not enough, we made an arrangement that none should have any (except some of our allies). It was a matter of distribution, but we called it a war of

principle. It went on so long, that only the economists remembered what the principles were and economists, of course, give away nothing ; unlike nations, not even each other."

If our children observe that it seems silly to them, we shall agree. It is silly to us. But we like being silly. The world likes being silly. Look at the radio, press, pictures, buildings, fashions in everything from coiffures to colloquialisms, it has permitted itself. All silly. Because all finally tending to make us miserable by way of being thwarted, unsatisfied, affected, inarticulate. And all because we have a compulsion to be miserable. That is all there is to it.

As individuals, and as citizens, we have for so long been threatened with punishments if we do what we want, that the world is full of people doing, often with considerable efficiency, what they don't want to ; or would not want to, if they weren't haunted by fear of punishment. By punishing themselves in this way, they hope to avert worse consequences from others.

But what everyone most wants to do is to arise and assert his or her self, each in a given sphere—inwardly an individual one, conditioned by gifts and circumstances, however outwardly general it may seem. But to arise would be to affirm individual responsibility and for most that is too frightening. Most of us refuse to recognize our potentialities. They are for good and for evil and we can't face the duality. We prefer to split. We dare not do good lest we accidentally commit evil, and evil we dread, not for itself, but for the punishments attendant on being found out. Consequently, our mottoes of loyalty, patriotism ; love, honour, and obey ; faith, hope, and charity, and the rest, have become not expression of inner needs but warnings with which we have invested an outer authority from which we can, when convenient, dissociate ourselves

by feigning unworthiness. We forget that the Original Sin was not the knowledge of good and evil, but the removal of the fruit so that it did not grow. We have lived a Laocoon in the serpentine branches ever since. We have lived locked in tension; of which the outer form is passivity. We will not arise, we say, lest we trample on others; what we really mean is that we might not trample sufficiently, and they might rise in their turn. So we trample down ourselves instead—by submerging.

But Life is a tricky mentor. It earmarks us before birth and dogs us after death. It has its own way with resigners. You may refuse to rise. Very well—lie down. Life will let you. But you are life, all the same, in however small a way. You resent lying down, since that isn't life's way—for long. So, afraid to rise lest you hurt, you put yourself in the position of being hurt. Then you can cry out, "Look what's happened to me—surely *now* I can hit back?" And the fun's on, we can all hit and hate, each perfectly happy at being hurt, because we have trumped up a justification. We can pretend we "didn't want to do it"—and having got so used to doing what we don't want, it is perfectly easy for the world to consider it its duty to have wars, or what might be called public suicide displays, every few years.

If, however, we declared that we enjoyed wars, and went into them, not for duty but for the sheer fun of them, then we might begin to examine the nature of such delight. For if war were admittedly our pleasure, we would also have to admit it is a pretty queer one, since in war a good time is had by none; the defeated do not like being beaten (nor, it seems, the liberated being liberated) and victors never win. Realizing this, we would come to the conclusion that we have wars because we like being miserable—and to know that would be an advance.

But we do not advance. We may have learnt a little, and

we have got used to doing without nearly everything, but here we are again, all ready to assuage our sense of guilt at winning by rushing after the defeated nation just as so many of us did last time. Then, it was Germany; now, it is France. France, in point of fact, is not defeated; she is resurgent, and for reasons it would be impolitic, as well as impolite, to state. One can only say that, all questions of occupation apart, France is in a different position from ourselves in not having been actively at war for four years; her resilience and effervescence, which are the reverse and the good side of her collapse, are qualities which we ourselves have had to put through the mincing machine of "war-effort". But emotionally and psychologically, France represents to many of us a defeated nation. Therefore, as with Germany in the last war, we must be kind. And therefore the present intellectual flight to Paris, and the elevation into a great poet of Aragon, whose latest work, as translated in the *New Statesman*, may be pardonably mistaken for a Mistinguett march—all this differs little from that flight to Berlin which provided Isherwood with the material that made his name. And because I am bored with this happening again, I propose next month to make no resolutions for the New Year, but requests for those it would help us all for others to make.

POEM AT CHRISTMAS

(To Joyce)

TO-NIGHT, A CRISP air clings to the traveller's face,
sharpen's quick diamonds set in city snow :
now, from this Northern land, I cross the space
between me and two thousand years ago ;

where, in a stable, wind hustling the door,
a woman labours. Her distracted cries
startle the steamy oxen on the floor
staring at her with moist and curious eyes.

What puzzled thoughts were awkward Joseph's then,
hearing the cattle's hot, half-fetid breath
and the creaking rafters ; seeing his Mary's pain
with more than ordinary fear and faith ?

Did he picture stately processions through a crowd,
obeisance, jewels, the triumphant crown ;
seasons and winds in their courses filled with the loud
glad truth that somehow the world would suddenly own ?

Or was it all so much a personal thing—
how thin the straw that covered the cold, grey stone ;
what it might do, this child his wife would bring
into the earth as his, that he'd not sown ?

Likely his dreams were those of simple men,
hailing new birth to carry the sick years on,
learning always the need to begin again
as the long, slow candles of the breath burn down.

How could he guess, watching a lantern flame
flicker its quiet shadows on the wall,
stroking her hand, perhaps murmuring her name,
vast centuries would centre on that stall ;

movements and peoples, churches, towers rise,
vaunt their vainglory for the gentle sake
of One who came with healing in his eyes
to fishers by a Galilean lake :

that only His difficult birth could be wholly glad,
the world, as always, trundle its selfish way ;
that a few would listen, but most would consider Him mad,
and all would deny His love at the end of the day ?

As I reach in my fancy towards that far-away scene,
share the wild joy that to shepherds a white star brought,
oh, more than the earth's blind turning has come between
me and that wondrous babe three wise men sought,

more than clean time : the accretions of history
have piled their lumber on the accepting heart,
death's unjust litter clogged the mystery,
so that the mind no longer can see it apart

from the tragic human act ; the unkempt fears
of poverty, lean hunger's cancerous ache,
the gash of unnatural loss, and the frozen tears
of wars that have broken pity over the rack.

To some, it is mostly an unbelievable story—
this sweet-faced Italian madonna in gold and blue,
a naked babe at her breast, in a halo of glory—
with a half-smothered hope that still it might all be true ;

that over the newspaper's clamoured advance or retreat
the long-ago angels' *et in terra pax*
would fall as softly as snow on this Glasgow street
like sleep on a child, and the straining world relax.

To-night, as I turn to the Christmas-cracker glow,
the party songs, gay lights and the yellow sherry
pledging the usual toast that the ways we go
will be hedged with success, and all our days be merry,

my faith, like wine in a half-filled, uncorked bottle
has lost its taste, gone bitter and flat and thin,
and nothing I do will strengthen the flavour a little,
no gesture of mine can pour a new wine in.

So I watch the spectrum that plays on the delicate glass
you hold to the light, my Darling ; and looking at you
I pray that whatever the future may bring to pass
that will hurt or please or maim, we may always be true

to ourselves and each other ; to those who have suffered
defeat
and are broken and weak, for whom love is an angry swan
its beauty shedded, hoarse terror cranning its beak,
attacking the cloud-white dream it once sailed upon.

For this is the only faith that is certain and sure,
the only belief that follows no guideless star,
leading the vagrant heart to that stable door
and the symbolled birth no staleness can ever mar.

MAURICE LINDSAY

THE NOBLE PROFESSION OF THE MERCHANT

By WINIFRED GRAHAM WILSON

*The love and service of our Country consisteth not so much in the knowledge of those duties which are to be performed by others, as in the skilfull practize of that which is done by our selves.*¹ There lies, in that skilfull practize of that which is done by our selves, something of moment. To Thomas Mun it was the keynote of his career. *He was in his time famous amongst Merchants, as his son John has told us, and well known to most men of business, for his generall Experience in Affairs, and notable Insight into Trade ; neither was he less observed for his Integrity to his Prince,*² *and Zeal to the Common-wealth.*³

This was the man whose belief in the benefits to be derived from *Forraign Trade* caused him to wax almost lyrical when he enumerated them in detail. Leaving for his son's perusal a tract that was in the nature of a *Legacy* and which became one of that son's best *Moveables* he gave as his opinion that the *true form and worth of forraign trade* lay in its capacity to be *The Great Revenue of the King, The honour of the Kingdom, The Noble profession of the Merchant, The School of our Arts, The supply of our wants, The employment of our poor, The improvement of our Lands, The Nurcery of our Mariners, The walls of our Kingdome, The means of our Treasure, The Sinnews of our wars, The terror of our Enemies.*⁴

With such an outlook, foreign trade was no question of mere buying and selling, of freightage and shipping, of cargo and cash. It was a lever by which a nation could attain greatness, *a laudable practize whereby the entercourse*

¹ *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade*, Thomas Mun. Reprint from first edition of 1664 by Economic History Society, 1933.

² James I.

³ Preface to above by John Mun.

⁴ *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade*. Thomas Mun.

of Nations could be worthily performed. It was in fine the verie Touchstone of a Kingdome's prosperitie, in which certen rules should be diligently observed.¹

To the Merchant then there were boundless possibilities ever widening out before him. And because of these possibilities wherein opportunities for national service occurred again and again, the Merchant must bring great gifts to his calling. He must possess qualities suited to one who acted as *The Steward of the Kingdoms Stock*. In fact there was almost no end to the excellent qualities which a perfect Merchant must exhibit. He ought—

(i) to be a good Penman, a good Arithmetician and a good Accomptant by that noble order of Debtor and Creditor, which was used onely amongst Merchants . . .

(ii) to know the Measures, Weights and Monies of all forraign Countries . . .

(iii) to know the Customs, Tolls, Taxes . . . upon all manner of Merchandize exported or imported.

(iv) to know in what severall Commodities each Country² abounds and what be the wares which they want, and how and from whence they are furnished with the same.

Further a merchant ought to understand and be a diligent observer of the rates of Exchanges by Billes, from one state to another . . . He ought, too, to know what goods are prohibited to be exported or imported in the said forraign countreys . . . upon what rates and conditions to fraight his Ships. Even then his knowledge was not complete. He must be familiar with the goodness and the prices of all the severall materials required for the building and repairing of Ships . . . as also for the Masts, Tackling, Cordage, Ordnance, Victuals, Munition and Provisions of many kinds together with the ordinary wages of Commanders, Officers and Mariners, all which concerns the Merchant as he is an Owner

¹ *A Discourse of Trade*, Thomas Mun. London, 1621. Reprint by Facsimile Text Society, New York, 1930.

² *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade*.

of Ships. He must be as it were a man of all occupations and trades . . . become skilful in the Art of Navigation . . . and in his capacity of Traveller, attain to the speaking of divers Languages . . . He should be a diligent observer . . . of Forraign Princes, their laws, customs, manners, religion, arts and the like ; to be able to give account thereof in all occasions for the good of his Countrey.

Then comes the coping-stone of all this architecture of good qualities. *Lastly although there be no necessity that such a Merchant should be a great Scholar, yet is it (at least) required, that in his youth he learn the Latin tongue, which will the better enable him in all the rest of his endeavours.*¹

It was entirely a case in Thomas Mun's mind of To whom much (opportunity) is given, much shall be required. For the East India Company was a gateway in his view, to such greatness for his country that nothing was too good to offer in its service.

It is interesting at this point to recollect how the East India Company came into being. A party of men was deputed to go on a journey of discovery to see what could be bought and sold in Asia. On arrival at Basra four of them remained behind and four went on with the intention of visiting India. They were, however, captured at Ormuz by the Portuguese, charged with heresy under the Inquisition ; and taken by ship to Goa where they were imprisoned. They managed to escape and reach the dominions of Akbar.

One of them, Ralph Fitch, determined to go alone to Burma. It was by then the autumn of 1584. Down the Ganges he went as far as Hoogli, then to Chittagong, next along the Bengal coast till he came to one of the mouths of the Irawaddy—up the Irawaddy, eventually in the tiniest of boats, till at last he reached Pegu. All through his journey Fitch made careful notes, recording an amazing number of

¹ *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade.*

things of the utmost interest and value. He was away from England eight years. "Except for his narrow escape at Goa he had no misadventures. He had travelled some twenty-four thousand miles by sea and land, mostly alone and at a period when travelling of the kind was extremely dangerous, yet he was neither robbed nor shipwrecked. He had acquired a mass of first-hand information of the greatest importance, which, when it was sifted by the merchants of London led to the founding nine years later of the East India Company.¹

His description of Pegu is a thing to wonder at . . . *a citie very great, strong and fair, and very prosperous, and is made square with faire walles and a great ditche round about it full of water with manie crodociles in it. It hath twenty gates. The streets are the fairest that ever I saw, as straight as a line from one gate to the other, and so broad that tenne or twelve men may ride a front thorow them.*

Fitch had an eye not only for the land but the sea. He noted that the King of Pegu had *little force by sea* because he possessed *but few ships*. In other parts, however, Fitch saw evidence of great shipping activity. In his day, of course, the Portuguese were at the height of their activity. Yet there were still large numbers of Indian ships plying along the rivers and carrying precious cargoes from port to port. Pyrard describes how in the early years of the seventeenth century there were two Cochins, one under the Portuguese and another under its own Moslem king. This king had still his own ships and participated in the vast volume of trade which was carried on in the double port. At Surat, however, at the same period the Portuguese had definitely the upper hand. "We learn from Captain Sharpeigh (1609) *that the Portugalls ordinarily in the somer lye att the Bar (of Surat) with 40 or 50 frigatts, that no boatte can go in or out without their license.*"²

¹ *British Merchant Adventurers*, Maurice Collis. Collins, 1942.

² Cited by Bal Krishna in *Commercial Relations between India and England (1601-1757)*, Routledge, 1924.

Before Ralph Fitch died he was able to see many English ships set out for India and the Spice Islands. He was able to do more : he saw many of them return with cargoes of such valuable materials as meant the realization of his dreams. Yet the first "fleet" of East India Company's ships seems a poor affair in comparison with merchant ships of to-day. There were four of these ships—their bottoms well coated with cement to protect them from worms. "Stores were obtained : food, wine and beer ; candles and lanterns, old stoves and water-casks. Goods for exchange were collected : iron, tin, lead, and cloth of different colours, scarlets, blues, *grasse greenes and sad greenes*, violets, and primrose. Guns for defence were provided. Presents were prepared to be given to an unknown king ; *a belt of girdell, a case of pistolles, some plewmes, looking glasses, platters, spones and toyes of glasse, spectackelles and drinking glasses of all sortes, an ewer of plain silver*. A surgeon, with a chest of remedies, and a preacher were appointed." ¹

Poor cargo this in comparison with what those port-to-port vessels were carrying in India and the Indies ! Poor too in relation to what returned ! For James Lancaster, the commander of the little fleet came back from the Spice Islands in the September of 1603, after two and a half years' absence, with his ships carrying spices : cloves, mace, nutmegs, *sinamon*, and pepper—this last being obtainable in several varieties : *Calicut, Billiapatam, Carwar, Malabar, Jambee*.

Even to read such a series is to be at once transported from the homely sound of English names to the romance and mystery of Indian towns and provinces. Transactions of the most ordinary kind are transmuted into magic when one delves deeper still into the details of the cargoes brought home by those long gone East India ships. Think of the

¹ *The Days of the Tudors and Stuarts*, C. B. Firth. Ginn and Company, 1936.

cloths that as the century wore on were detailed in the freight lists: the *Sarapuras*, *Cassas*, *Comsas*, *Beatillias*, and a thousand such-like names! There were, too, the amazingly lovely flowered tussar materials known as *Herba cloths*, so decorated with flowers, branches and personages that it was wonderful to see, and they were so finely done with Cuning workmanship that they could not be mended throughout Europe.¹ Again there were the cotton materials: the *atlases*, *adittaes*, *allibannies*, *allajaes*, *bettellees*, *chints*, *cossaes*, *chautars*, *callowaypooses*, *chucklaes*, *chuckreaes*, *dimities*, *doreas*, *elatches*, *ginghams*, *gurrahs*, *cherulaes* *jamwars*, and *jamdhunies* to name but a fraction of them. There were *floretta* yarn, *cotton* yarn, *raw silk*, *red wood*, *saltpetre*, *shellack* and *sticklach*, *borax*, *cambogium*, *green ginger* and *jambee canes*, *pictures on paper*, *paintings on pelongs*, *fans*, *tea* and *musk*.

In 1631, the King issued a Proclamation² detailing what goods might be imported from India into England, and what exported from this country to India in return. The export list was: *Perpetuanas* and *drapery*, *pewter*, *saffron*, *woollen stockings* and *garters*, *riband roses edged with gold lace*, *beaver hats with gold and silver bands*, *felt hats*, *strong waters*, *knives*, *Spanish leather shoes*, *iron* and *looking glasses*. The import list reads very differently: *Long pepper*, *white pepper*, *white powder sugar*,³ *nutmegs* and *ginger preserved*, *mirabolans*, *bezoar stones*, *drugs*, *agate beads*, *blood stones*, *musk aloes socotrina*, *ambergres*, *carpets of Persia* and *Cambara*, *quilts of sattin*, *taffaty*, *printed callicoes*, *benjamin*, *damask*, *sattins* and *taffaties*, *quilts of China embroidered with gold*, *quilts of Pitama embroidered with silk*, *galls*, *worm seeds*, *sugar candy*,³ *China dishes*, and *puslanes of all sorts*. We may marvel at the foolishness of sending the woollen stockings, the beaver hats, the felt hats, and even the strong

¹ Cited from Linschoten, by Bal Krishna.

² King's Proclamation of 1631. B. Museum. Eng. Fact., vol. 1630-33.

³ The sugar is worth noting.

waters, but there was wisdom in the export of the looking glasses. For looking glasses, it seems, were in great demand by Indian princes and rich merchants.

At this point it should be noted that as "cotton fabrics were then and now best suited for the Indian climate, woollens could only be used for the coverings of elephants and the making of saddles. They were fit for the use of the nobility only. In 1617 the Surat factors complained that broadcloth had *become a very drug*. This slump necessitated more than once the curtailment of the invoice very considerably"¹ . . . Here is one of the invoices, for coverings of elephants and materials for saddles

500 *Venice Red cloths*

100 *Popinjay greens and light grass greens*

100 *Straw colours, yellows and horse flesh*

100 *Light blues, commonly called Hulings*

200 *Murries in grave and other pleasant colours*

500 *Pieces of Devon Kersies of the colours above said of 50s.*

That there were fluctuations in the volume of East India trade most people know. But the causes of these fluctuations are not so readily recognized. There were wars in India itself between the native rulers, there were trade jealousies between the European nations trading in the East—troubles between English and Portuguese; between English and Dutch. "To the ravages of war were added the unbearable misery and suffering caused by a widespread famine, due to the wars on the eastern coast and to drought and inundation at Surat and many other inland places . . . Then came the convulsion in England caused by the civil strife. It could not but have a prejudicial effect upon the Company's trade. A serious blow was given to the trade in Persian silk. The rigid and austere manners of the Republicans had rendered silks less an article in demand than under the polished manners of a court. Then *the tragicall storry of*

¹ Bal Krishna.

the king's beheading threatened the loss of the Gombroon customs."¹ But in spite of everything, dividends in the long run were high, and trade passed more and more into European hands.

In fact, the East India Company's "navy" was of a uniquely powerful character. "In its very infancy it broke the power of the Portuguese in India and Ormus, in its adolescence it annihilated the Mogul fleet under the Seede, destroyed the Maratha navy under the Angrias, expelled the Dutch from India and captured the Indian possessions of the formidable French . . . The English were looked upon as *sovereigns of the seas, Lions of the Ocean, Lords of the Waters*. Even Aurangzeb contented himself in the enjoyment of the Indian continent, thinking that God had allotted the Unstable Element to Christian rule."

And so we see how Thomas Mun and those who followed after him, failed so completely, in spite of high ideals, to grasp the reciprocal character inherent in the only worthwhile type of foreign trade. They could envisage the trade of Merchandize as that *laudable practice whereby the intercourse of Nations is so worthily performed*, yet they failed to realize that intercourse between nations could no longer continue when one of the parties to that intercourse was ruined by the other. The *noble profession of the Merchant* could only remain noble so long as forraign trade was in no sense a game of beggar-my-neighbour but the carrying out of the "good old classical doctrine of the international division of labour, with foreign trade as a vehicle for the economy of man power".²

¹ Bal Krishna.

² H. W. Singer, Economics Department, Manchester University, *Three Years of War*. Manchester Guardian, 10th September, 1942.

SARDINE-FISHERS AT DAYBREAK

LIFTED ON LINEN, I feel
In the full moon's white lake
Death in the wake of the keel,
Threads that strain and break
Before the breaking of day.
Noise knocked me awake,
Flight of the Milky Way,
Then hammering heels, a wake
Of heels on the cobbled town,
Clogs clattering down
To the harbour, a march of death,
Flight of the lives under breath,
From the shooting light, their race,
Pulled to the meeting-place,
Caught in short nets, they shun,
Gasping, the livid sun.

Snared sunbeams, flashing, show
A forest of masts, a fire
Of colour ; and, mounting higher,
Tall rods that flicker and glow
Moored at Concarneau, where
A reflected clock tells time.
Rapier-like they climb
From the bright boats anchored there.
These wait for a priest to bless
Their going ; and the folded sails,
Bound for the coast of Wales,
Point, in their idleness,
North, where sardine-boats dress
In nets near the Point each tree ;
And octopus-dark below,
Where blood-red tunnies go,
Audierne, the silent sea.

Before dawn, hard to discern,
From the jetty, cold as a cairn,
Thumping with motors, go
Ships from Audierne,
And hang their nets low.
Slow from the grey quay, slow,
Without sails they pass.
Then three in a dinghy row
Out on the sea of glass.
One stands in the dinghy, seen
Flinging meal as to fowls.
The moon is white like a queen.
He gives a sign ; and with owls'
Noiseless flight they steal
Back to the silent keel.

Flat, flat as a lake
Is the sea, silent, a wonder.
That silence who can break ?
They are the silver under
Breath, and all shall die.
Rough hands take
Over the slippery, sly
Sides of the ship blue nets
Of fish that fall in a heap
On the deck, bright winding-sheets
Coiled in the wake of sleep.
Their touch no hand reveals
Through the strange, cold element
Until they fall in creels,
Killed by the daylight, spent.

Where three hundred ships meet,
Miles out at sea, a silent fleet,
Before light breaks, blue nets,

Gossamer, fine as lawn,
Are dropped from their threaded floats,
Dropped from the sardine-boats
By hands familiar with dawn.

From under the waking sea
Ascend the brilliant heads
Of sleep. Mysteriously
I watch them, caught in threads,
Tugged like a silver river,
Hauled by rough hands over
The burdened side of the ship,
Terrified, shuddering, shy
Incarnations of sky,
Hover, tumble down
To the sleek boards, wet and brown
Under a rust-brown sail.
They lie about rope and bale,
Flounder, splash, and are still,
Cast on a mounting hill.

Ah cold, where no two lives meet,
Light's fine needle quivers.
Under sea a white film hovers,
A caul whose haul discovers,
White as a winding-sheet,
Gasping in death, night's lovers,
Flight of hid stars. The sun
Is rising, rising. The sun
Is rising, waking from sleep.
Look, they sparkle and leap,
Vanishing, one by one.
With heaving force they are drawn
Over the spanned ship's sides
By hands grown old with the tides,

And dropped there, trophies of dawn,
Shaken, taken,
Frail, lit, forsaken,
Falling 'dead at my feet.

Sky is brightening while they are spent.
Four men are standing afresh
While one is crouching, bent.
The crew rip open the tent
Of light. With a knife they gash
The brilliant, awakened sheet.
They are shaking the silver fish.
Caught, I see them flash,
Fastened, glittering, steep
Into blue threads drawn
From darkness, wrung from sleep,
Falling in that bright heap,
Hung in the webs of dawn.

VERNON WATKINS

LONDON'S SAINT

By M. V. HUGHES

IF YOU ASK the next Londoner you meet to name his patron saint he will probably say "St. Paul". When you reply, "Wrong, try again," his thoughts will perhaps fly to the Abbey, and then he may hesitate, unless he is a Westminster boy. Even if he thinks of St. Peter he is still wrong, for Westminster is not even *in* London. A Mercers' School boy would probably answer pat, for our saint was born in a house in Cheapside (between Nos. 86 and 89) where Mercers' chapel now stands—unless it has been destroyed by enemy action. His father, Gilbert Beket, was a great City man, whose love-story is familiar to children, told to them perhaps in order to point out the advantage of knowing a foreign language, even if only two words.

Thomas was an only child, and a grand fellow throughout his life, from his schooldays to his martyrdom. As a statesman he was magnificent, and as a churchman he outdid the holiest. He washed the feet of thirteen beggars every day—surely a work of supererogation, for our Lord washed the feet of only twelve, and that not every day, nor beggars'. And when it came to being martyred, he fought thoroughly, not turning the other cheek as one might expect, but rounding on his assailants with all his force.

A bloodstained stone, a piece about six inches square, by the spot where he fell in Canterbury Cathedral, was sent to Rome. The cowardly attack by four armed men on an unarmed priest shocked the Pope and also the whole of Christendom. Not only was Thomas canonized, but churches sprang up under his name throughout England, and there were many even on the Continent. It is probable that the great charm of Beket for Englishmen lay in the

fact that he had defied the King. He refused to pay a tax to the King of two shillings a hide : the first case of such opposition in English history. Owing to his birthplace he was naturally chosen as the patron saint of London, and the ancient Common Seal of London bore this inscription :

Me que te peperit ne cesses Thoma tueri.

A very appropriate prayer at the present moment, when one comes to think of it.

How is it, then, that the average Londoner of to-day hardly gives his patron saint a thought ? It is a sad story, for it tells of a good thing gone bad. The enthusiasm for St. Thomas of Canterbury took another form beside the building of churches under his patronage. Pilgrims from remotest parts of the country walked or rode to Canterbury to see the place of the martyrdom. It was a grand excursion, and brought endless benefits to the pilgrims beside the ostensible spiritual ones. Its open-air life improved the health of millions, so that there was a saying that "St. Thomas is the best doctor". The companionship of people from the distant parts of England contributed perhaps more than any one other factor to our union as a nation, in language, tradition, and new ideas. People were "taken out of themselves" in a most enjoyable way. The whole movement (as it literally was) inspired Chaucer's great poem, which was the first of a recent spate of novels concerned with the lives of different persons thrown together fortuitously.

Why, then, should such a good thing come to an end ? One might almost say that Henry II killed the body of St. Thomas, and that Henry VIII killed his spirit. It might be thought that any king of England would be proud of a saint who drew pilgrims from all parts of Christendom to an English shrine. But Henry VIII had a ruling passion more potent than patriotism. He loved magnificence and the money that provides it. Now, of course, every

pilgrim brought offerings to Canterbury, and preferred to lay them at the shrine of St. Thomas rather than at any other. One year the Virgin received only about £4, while St. Thomas had nearly £500—an enormous sum in those days. It was easy for Henry to work up some righteous indignation, not so much at the neglect of the Virgin, as at the ill-behaviour of the pilgrims. Of course, lots of them behaved a bit riotously on their one great holiday, and made up stories of their adventures and miraculous cures, so that a “Canterbury tale” came to mean a lie. Then they brought home relics of all sorts and sold them at big prices—very reprehensible of course. So Henry, carried away by his religious zeal, destroyed that most sacred shrine, scattered the bones of St. Thomas, *and* took the money that had been offered by the pilgrims. It was a good thing for him that news travelled slowly in those days, or he might have been torn limb from limb.

All the churches throughout England whose patron saint was St. Thomas of Canterbury were ordered to change his name to St. Thomas the Apostle. A very few either refused, or neglected, to do this, and I am proud to think that my own parish is one of these. The name of St. Thomas was struck off the calendar. Henry VIII was a thorough man. Even a little church on the pilgrims' route known as St. Martyr, or the holy martyr, had its name changed to St. Martha, the one and only instance, I imagine, that Martha has been regarded as a saint.

But even Henry VIII could not banish Thomas from England. If there is one spot that is more “London” than another it is London Bridge. For centuries it was the only way over the river in the town. All the pilgrims from the north had to cross over it. From early days the crossing of a bridge was a kind of religious ceremony, for the bridges were built by monks mainly for the use of pilgrims, who used to make a thankoffering en route for their safe

journey. For this purpose a chapel was usually built on or near any large bridge. Now in the centre of London Bridge there stood a chapel to St. Thomas of Canterbury. During repairs to the wharves from time to time a large number of pilgrims' badges have been found, and are now to be seen in the London Museum. There are little metal figures of St. Thomas, and one has the inscription: "Optimus egrorum medicus fit Toma."

London Bridge is a most fascinating place to spend a whole day, and if you take a bite of lunch with you to eat there, you will not be the only one to do so. The docks and the shipping seem to be the chief attraction, including the Dutch boats that have a right granted by Queen Elizabeth to be there. And there are the buildings in the distance, and your fellow-gazers, to amuse you; but be sure to give a thought to St. Thomas. There is a song much in vogue to-day, emphasizing the peculiar interest of this bridge. The King is still in London, it asserts, if London Bridge is falling down . . . with Mr. Jones and Mr. Brown.

The bridge may be destroyed any day, but we shall still have an imperishable reminder of our patron saint. Whenever we have been blessed with a great hero we have named our children after him, and for centuries Thomas of Canterbury provided an inspiring name for English boys. The typical Irishman is always called Pat, a Scot Sandy, and a Welshman Taffy, while the English soldier is not called George but Tommy. Perhaps this is because St. Patrick, St. Andrew, and St. David were all real people in real life, while (until recently) St. George appears to have done nothing but attack a dragon with an inadequate short sword. Now we know all about our St. Thomas, from his birth in Cheapside through his career, now brilliant, now holy, to his heroic stand against his murderers.

So Thomas is our generic name. A group of Englishmen

is referred to as "Tom, Dick, and Harry" (Tom first). Any little boy is addressed as "Tommy", on the off-chance that that is his name, and in the expressions Tom Fool, Tom Noddy, Tom o' Bedlam, we see how the name became almost as generic as "man". If we run our mind over our annals what a number of great statesmen, writers, and poets called Thomas come up. And then in the world of imagination we can count Tom Jones, Peeping Tom, Tom Cringle, Tom Pinch, Tom the little chimney-sweep, Tom Sawyer, Tom Brown. (Apropos of the last there is a story that a man gave his nephew a copy of *Tom Jones*, thinking it was just such another story as *Tom Brown*.) As it happens, the heroes in all these books are wildly unlike each other—perhaps only alike in being likeable. The Toms of song, too, may touch our hearts or make us laugh, from Tom Bowling to the over-generous Tom Pearce and Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all. Even the piper's son is looked upon more as a hero than scoundrel in these lean times. The name Thomas Atkins (for a private soldier) was suggested by Wellington when he was asked to give a name for "any soldier" in a legal form. He remembered it as the name of a dying soldier, holding solidly on with the words: "It's all in the day's work, sir."

There was a Tom in the Ingoldsby Legends whom I greatly envied. All I knew about him were the lines: "The clock is striking nine; give master Tom another cake and half a glass of wine." And in one of our books as children there was a story called "How Terrible Tom was Reformed". This little scapegrace did everything he should not, climbed trees, tore his clothes, fell in ponds, answered back, and had a thoroughly good time. His mother's heart was of course near to breaking till one day a kind uncle suggested that Tom should be measured for a fine new suit of clothes. He then became so pleased with his appearance that he never misbehaved again. I found this

denouement disappointing as a child, and now I am grown up I consider it immoral.

In all novels and stories and poems I have never come across a Tom of the goody-goody type, and St. Thomas of Canterbury is a very appropriate patron saint for us. And when we are enjoying a ride on horseback (still a possibility) let us remember that the lovely motion of a canter is so called from the mode of travel of the Canterbury pilgrims.

My eldest brother was named Tom, and he gloried in the story of the last fight in Canterbury Cathedral; he taught me to recite the names of the four dastardly knights who did to death one unarmed man. Here they are, for deathless opprobrium: Fitzurse, Tracy, Morville, and Brito. Yet I feel sure that Tom never knew the *day* of his patron saint. Nor does any Tom you come across. So thoroughly did Henry VIII erase the saint from the calendar that very few are aware that they are named after a saint at all, let alone aware of his day. I was once visiting the library of Worcester Cathedral, and was shown an old calendar with the smudge that had been made over the name of St. Thomas in the time of Henry VIII. Unfortunately I cannot now remember the date.

For the matter of that very few Londoners will be able to tell you offhand the feast-days of the great apostles, St. Peter, St. Paul, or St. John. But there is one saint, with a church in the City, whose day everyone knows, not only in London but all over the country. He bears a Saxon name, and is more "English" than Thomas of Canterbury, but I have yet to meet anyone named after him. St. Swithin—15th July. The legend is that if 15th July is fine the weather will be fine for the next forty days; if wet, it will rain during the next forty days, and most people look apprehensively skywards during the 15th.

Who was St. Swithin? Seldom is the famous answer

more appropriate—"he was a great and good man who lived a long time ago." But among a mass of legends we may be sure of two facts—that he was a bishop of Winchester in the ninth century. His saintliness took the form of great humility (as was the case with Thomas), and he is said to have feasted the poor and not the rich, to have walked, not ridden, about his diocese, and ordered his body to be laid in some commonplace spot, where the passers-by would tread and the rain would fall. In later years his body was translated to a shrine in Winchester Cathedral. The story goes that the saint showed his displeasure with this act by causing rain to fall for forty days.

Meteorologists have probably some sensible explanation to give for the stability of weather for a *while* after mid-July. But my own particular interest in the legend lies in the word "forty". With the biblical writers it is obvious that "forty" meant a "good number" as we should say. When nothing spectacular was found to be recorded, "the land had rest forty years" says the chronicler. Some long visit to the wilderness would be "forty days". The Israelites were forty years in their wanderings, the flood took forty days to abate—instances are too numerous to mention, but it is obvious that careful calculation must have been impossible in them all. Again, *three* meant a short time: Jonah in the whale, for instance. It is easy to understand the "three", used as in our vague expression "three or four", but is there also something queer and mystical about "forty"? Perhaps it comes from a prehistoric gesture of fingers and toes—shown twice. I remember being left at home alone one Sunday morning when I was a tiny child, and amused myself by seeing how far I could count. I went bravely on till I came to forty, and then said, "I don't think it can possibly go beyond forty."

So far as I know at present the church of St. Swithin

has not been destroyed by enemy action, and I am specially anxious that it should be spared, because it guards a great treasure. In its outer wall, facing Cannon Street Station, there is a stone, not much larger than a football. It is probably a sacred relic of some ancient religion, and must have been much larger originally. The Romans used it as a centre for calculating mileage from the town, and called it the milliarium. Shakespeare uses the old tradition that kings were seated on it to be crowned. It lay neglected in the road near the church for some time, until it was rescued by a private citizen, and housed in its present position. It is known as London Stone, and the church is called "St. Swithin London Stone". For a long time it was considered to mark the centre of the town. But such an idea now raises only a smile. A rich man once made up his mind to build a house so far out from London that the town should never extend to it. That was Burlington House. And the region of what is now Trafalgar Square used to be called Barbadoes, because it was farthest west. London is too big, of course, too crowded, and full of many faults, but it *is* the centre of things. What sweeter words after a long journey than "London only"? Which of us has not learnt to spell it in our infancy by the doggerel: Two Os two Ns an L and a D—put them together and spell them to me? Which of us doesn't love it in a quite unreasonable way—the only way to love anybody or anything?

Perhaps in the rebuilding of London after the war, room will be found in Cheapside for a memorial to our Thomas, although he was decanonized by a greedy king. His gallant fight with four armed murderers may have faded from the memory of his fellow-citizens, but it is grand to think that he may have been let loose from the Elysian Fields to steel the hearts of Londoners letting things go, on that awful night of September when the dull red glow from dusk to

dawn hung over unspeakable terrors. Was it he who inspired the cartoonist to draw that simple flash of genius—a hand holding a sword in the flames, with the legend “Tempering the Steel?”

POEM

I HAVE 'COME a long way from the blood's tidal voice,
Moaning and wailing across the saltflats of the mind;
A long way from the haggard priest in the twilit land
Where orchids scream in a glass-green night,
While weeping ghosts with their howling dogs
Call out to the child with flowers in his eyes.

I have moved far from the image of another
Who once walked with me, sharing one shadow;
I have reached the prize of my own rough shroud,
Out of another's decay to my own rightful death,
And the ecstatic freedom of a personal end
Shared now with no one, and which none shall ever share.

HENRY TREECE

THE ACTIVE HEAD

"I AM THE active head," he said,
"Of a murder gang. I supply
The proverb : do or die.
Where are you
Who would deny
That I am tried and true ?" He said
These things diffidently, as though one who knew
The way of the world. He spread
A map upon the table, with eloquent
Gestures. "I am unable,"
He said, "to guess at your intent,
Whether it is to do you wish
Or to die. But, whichever it is, I
Am your man. I can invent
The method for you ; apply
The poison label
To the bottle or put
The arsenic in the fish.
Whatever it is you want,
I can turn it out."

"But," I said, "I do not wish
To do or die. Contemplation
Is my forte. Passion,
It is true,
Is roused in me : by the flesh,
Say, or by the beautiful, but who
Is to say that this map is able
To point to
Either of these, so eloquently
Posited on this table ?
It is up to me,

I suppose,
To make a choice, but who knows
His own voice in the dark, who
Knows what he wants to do ? ”
I put my finger on
The map and said ;
“ I wish to live at dawn,
And not be dead.”

“ I also,” he said,
“ Invented the proverb : to-morrow never comes.
You cannot merely sit,
Neither doing nor dying. It
Just isn't done. I'm not the one
To carp unnecessarily,
But really
It wouldn't be much fun ;
Listening to the rattle of the drums,
Peering at the circle of the sun,
Seeing those who die
Eloquently. You must try
To do something, either to commit
The crime or suffer it.
What else is there to do
In a world where it is true
That I am the active head ;
Either you do, or be dead.”

“ Supposing,” I replied,
“ That I am not denied,
As you are denying me,
Any alternative ?
Suppose that I decide to live
Eloquently. To be
The mover of the map,

The insistent eye
That will not do or die,
But challenges the lap
Of the familiar waves and turns
The rocky coast into another shape,
In which there *is* hope?
If every year returns
Back to the same point, is
There any use in this
Doing or dying,
Since you, the active head,
Will be denying
Its true activity," I said.
"And, anyway, if you are the active head,
Suppose I apply
The proverb to you: Are you to do or die?"

NICHOLAS MOORE

September, 1944.

THE TWO LADY RAMS

By MULK RAJ ANAND

WHEN HIS MAJESTY the King Emperor (or whichever department it was that acted on His Majesty's behalf) conferred the title of Knighthood on Lalla Jhinda Ram in recognition of his sundry services to the British Empire, His Majesty's Government did not realize the awful domestic predicament into which they would put him. Of course, there is no way in which His Majesty the King Emperor, sitting seven thousand miles away from India, can ever get to know very much of the private lives of his subjects. And the department acting in his name which draws up the birthday or New Year's honours lists, though possessed of fairly well-documented confidential dossiers about the temperament, religious, political, and social opinions of almost all notable persons, as well as notorieties, and particularly about the services rendered to the Sarkar by them, is singularly inept and formal about the human details of their lives. Under the circumstances the crisis which the honour of Knighthood precipitated in Lalla Jhinda Ram's house was as inevitable as a sudden blow from Destiny, and brought more sorrow in its train than the joy which such a rise to eminence and respectability brings with it. For Jhinda Ram had two wives, and, naturally, both of them insisted on being called Lady Ram.

Of course, Lalla Jhinda Ram was fairly well able to cope with this crisis in its earlier stages, as he merely ignored the tension between his wives, which began to manifest itself in long sulks and occasional snatches of unmentionable dialogue after the news of the award came through. Jhinda Ram was too busy receiving and answering the numerous congratulations which were arriving, and in his furtive colloquies with that part of himself which did not really believe that he, Jhinda Ram, contractor, whose father was a small shopkeeper, had suddenly been lifted from his

five-foot-five of corpulence to an exalted height equal to that of any six-foot-six Sahib. Apart from the vertical height which he had attained, there was the pleasurable feeling of the extension of his personality in girth on the horizontal plane, as it were, through the aura of glory that already radiated from him as he contemplated himself and smiled to the full length mirror in stolen sidelong glances when none of his servants were about. As his wives had been wrangling for the last seven years, that is to say, ever since the young, twenty-five-year-old Sakuntala came and ousted the fifty-year-old Sukhi, so he regarded their renewed bitterness as only another phase of the quarrel which he had dodged by segregating them in two different parts of his house.

But the quarrel took a serious turn as soon as Jhinda realized that with the news of the award of Knighthood there was the invitation to attend the Garden Party which was to be held at the residence of His Excellency the Governor the next day, specially for the ceremony of investiture of all those dignitaries who had been granted titles, medals, and scrolls of honour.

For the invitation which came from Government House was for Sir Jhinda and Lady Ram. And as the new knight only asked his younger wife, Sakuntala, to buy a new Sari and get ready for the occasion the news of this discrimination travelled through the servants to the part of the house where the old wife, Sukhi, was segregated. And there was trouble.

Perhaps, however, trouble is too mild a word for what happened. For it was a veritable war that broke out in the comparatively peaceful house of Sir Jhinda, and trenches were dug, or rather, barricades raised, and if there was no gunpowder used it was only because women in India have not yet learned all the tricks of Al Capone as men have through the talkies.

The bungalow in which Lalla Jhinda Ram and his two spouses lived had been specially built before his second marriage in the now famous Purdah style which has become current in Hindustan. Its front, which looked out into Lawrence Road, was like the front of an ordinary English bungalow, with a veranda, decorated by palm-trees and hanging plants leading through a narrow hall into a large living room. On either side of this commodious salon were a suite of bedrooms and boudoirs, bounded by a walled square, which was itself divided by a high wall running right through the middle of the compound.

Until the beginning of the war over the question as to who was to be called Lady Ram and go with Sir Jhinda to the investiture at the Government House, both Sukhi and Sakuntala had more or less followed a convention not to interfere with each other but to keep to their different households, attended by servants who all lived a common life in a row of one-roomed houses outside the bungalow. Lalla Jhinda Ram slept alternate nights in the suites of the two wives, and spent the few hours during which he was at home in the daytime in the English-style gol kamra or living-room. And life went on smoothly enough, except when these unwritten agreements were violated in any way. Even if there were differences over any undue favour that the lord and master was known, through the gossip of servants, to be showing to one wife over the other, it was settled through the long sulk method of boycott or through the malicious gossip campaign conducted with the help of partisan servants or relations. And as both wives enjoyed an equal status under custom, and the rankling bitterness of the old wife was alleviated by the consideration that her husband had only married a second time for the perpetuation of the race, since she was barren, life had passed smoothly enough.

But in the crisis which matured before the investiture

a question of principle suddenly arose. For the English, who still allowed the Hindu Mitakshra Law to be practised side by side with the Indian penal code which they had imposed, and who therefore allowed a man to marry three or four wives, had made no ruling whether all or any of these wives could assume the title of Lady in case the husband was suddenly raised to a Knighthood, Viscounty, Earldom, Dukedom, or anything like that. The question presented itself to Sukhi, the elder wife, that if she was not allowed to call herself Lady Jhinda Ram she, the less favoured of the two wives, would lose all the prestige that belonged to her as a *mater familias* and that she would be as good as thrown on the rubbish heap in full view of that chit of a girl, Sakuntala, who had so far regarded her as a kind of mother-in-law and been fairly respectful to her.

So early in the morning after she heard that Sakuntala alone had been asked by the lord and master to go to the garden party at Government House, Sukhi outflanked the wall that divided the suite of rooms from her younger rival, and walked straight through the English-style living-room and opened her attack.

"Eater of her masters, this is the last humiliation which you had to cast on me!" she began. "But I shall pull every hair of your head and blacken your face!!!"

Sir Jhinda and Lady Sakuntala Ram had hardly yet awakened from their deep slumber. On hearing this violent language they scrambled out of bed lest Sukhi should really mishandle them.

"Go to your rooms," Sir Jhinda said peremptorily, rubbing his eyes.

"I will stay here if I like," said the loud Sukhi. "I am the owner of the whole of this house. You had nothing before I brought a lakh of rupees in my dowry! . . . What

did this bitch bring with her—nothing but a fair complexion and a snub nose.”

“Go, go, gentle woman!” protested Sakuntala meekly. “Go to your own part of the house and don’t eat my life.”

Whereupon Sukhi let loose a flood of curses, imprecations and innuendo, and silenced them both.

Unable to bear the continued flow of her abuse Sir Jhinda ultimately had to resort to *force majeure*. Like a true knight of old he summoned the sense of chivalry towards his young love and, taking Sukhi by the hair, tried to drag her away to her part of the house. Strangely enough the old woman did not respect her lord and master any more, for she resisted like a tiger and, upturning the table in the living room, barricaded herself there and waxed eloquent about the misdeeds of Sir Jhinda and Lady Ram all day.

Sir Jhinda was sufficiently perturbed by her stand to go and telephone the A.D.C. to His Excellency the Governor to ask for an appointment to see him on an urgent matter.

The A.D.C., who was busy with arrangements for the garden party, stalled, presuming that Sir Jhinda Ram was after some deal or contract as usual, and though the commissions which the Sahib had received from this knight had always been generous, Captain Forbes had made his pile and did not want to get involved in these shady negotiations any more.

But as the battle between his two wives was still raging at noon when Sir Jhinda returned home for the midday meal, the knight was very distressed and thought of a typically Indian and very unorthodox manner of approach to the whole question: Always in time of trouble in the old days any man could go right up to the king, Sir Jhinda knew; so he would go and see the Governor of the Province, the King’s representative, the shadow of the monarch.

He had, however, reckoned without the hosts. For, as

he drove up to the gates of Government House, the Sepoy on sentry-go wanted to see his pass. And no lies that Sir Jhinda could concoct about his being the contractor who had to superintend the supply of cutlery for the garden party would satisfy the soldier of the King.

"The garden party is in the afternoon," the Sepoy said. "Lat Sahib is at tiffin. And there are strict orders that no one should disturb his siesta."

Sir Jhinda, humiliated before his chauffeur, got into his car and returned homewards. On the way he exercised all his wits to discover some way to solve the infernal crisis in which he found himself. But howsoever he looked at the problem, he knew a few things were certain: one, that Sukhi would never let him rest all his life, if she was not called Lady Ram and taken to the garden party; two, that Sakuntala would never let him come near her if, after having told her to prepare for the garden party he now withheld this pleasure from her; three that there was no way of contacting the Governor or A.D.C., and that it was no use seeking advice of any of the gentry in the town because they would be malicious and make a joke of what was a question of life and death for him.

"Forgive me, Lallaji," said the chauffeur, turning round as Jhinda Ram got out of the car in the drive of his bungalow, "forgive me for being so officious as to make a humble suggestion —"

"What do you know of all this?" said Sir Jhinda Ram, angry but humble, for he knew his servants knew all about his predicament. "Speak, what have you to say?"

"Maharaj, forgive me who is not good enough to clean the dust of your shoes . . . But why don't you take both the Bibis to the party?"

"Acha, mind your business," said Sir Jhinda Ram gruffly, and dismissed the driver.

But in his heart of hearts he thought how obvious and

simple a solution to the whole problem this was. Why, if he could marry two wives in law, he certainly ought to have a right to call them both "Lady Rams". He was so elated at the thought that he did not notice his bad English. He was slightly worried that there was no precedent for this, but he would create the precedent. And, anyhow, the Governor could not turn one of his wives out if he took them both to the party. The only difficulty was the invitation card which was only for Sir Jhinda and Lady Ram. . . . But that was easy. He would alter the words to "the two Lady Rams", as he had altered many more intricate documents in the past.

"Ohe," he called to the chauffeur, "Go and tell both the Bibis to get ready for the garden party. And get my bearer to serve my tiffin."

With that quality of tact which the driver had displayed to Sir Jhinda, he respectfully approached both the wives and told each of them separately that she alone of the two wives was going to the garden party. Sakuntala had already been confident enough about her husband's choice, but Sukhi's vanity was tickled by the special emphasis that the chauffeur laid on the Master's ultimate choice of her and appeased her wrath for the while so that she began to prepare for the occasion.

The duplicity of the driver afforded Sir Jhinda enough time to eat his midday meal in peace and even to have his siesta, a bath, and a change of clothes. And when the two wives appeared, both dressed in the most flashing saris, and found they had been tricked, they dared not, out of respect for their prolonged toilet, gouge each other's eyes out. Besides, the clever driver took charge of them and Sir Jhinda and, bundling them into the car, sped towards the Government House.

The sentries at the gates of the holy of holies presented arms to the honoured guests as the car slid into the drive.

And apart from the lifted eyebrows of the butler as he sonorously proclaimed "Sir Jhinda and 'the two Lady Rams'" to Their Excellencies, who stood receiving the guests at the head of a marquee, nothing untoward happened. As a matter of fact, Her Excellency made it a point to compliment the two Ladies Ram on their wonderful saris, and His Excellency was cordiality itself when he presented the Star of the Knight-Commander of the Indian Empire to Sir Jhinda Ram.

There were a few young boys and girls who chuckled as they furtively whispered to each other "Look, there!—'the two Lady Rams!'" But then the youth of to-day in Government House and outside is notorious for its complete disregard of all manners, codes, conventions, rules, and regulations. And such disrespect was only to be expected.

Since that day Sir Jhinda and "the two Lady Rams" are a familiar feature of all ceremonial occasions in our capital, and no Empire Day, cricket match, or horse race is complete without them, for they are three staunch pillars of the Raj, which has conceded to them privileges unknown in the annals of the angrezi Sarkar in India.

TINKER'S DAMN

By WILLIAM KEMP

WHENEVER I COME dropping down the long road into this Scots town I get the same feeling—it's a place waiting to grip you by the throat. It's the same whatever way you come into it, for all the roads lead down, and it lies in a bowl, a reeking bowl, with a raw thick mist and dirty slow smoke from factory chimneys stirring about like the steam from a witches' kettle. The raw damp grues your bones and tears at your lungs, when it's December, like this. It's only raw spirits that can fight it. It's a place to drive you to drink. And it's a place I've a debt in, a debt that's worrying me like toothache.

It's two years since I was last in the place, and I'm seldom near it at this time of the year. It's better in July, when the berries are on, and the air is heavy with the fruit scents, and night and day they're driving the baskets that we fill to the station. But then it's drink again, drink when the fun's agoing—and that has something to do with my debt too.

I'm here for a funeral this time. And if I'm in the place by three o'clock I should manage it. Though my name doesn't begin with "Mac", still I suppose I'm as much one of the wandering clan as anybody. Anyhow, they want me for the lassie's funeral, and when word reached me on the westerly side of Loch Awe, it was "bundle and go" without a question. How should I hear, that's never had a letter for thirty years. Well, if you'll keep it to yourself, it was the man that drives the Sunday papers to Oban that left the word for me. Lucky I was with a car from Crianlarich to Perth, and my legs have done the rest.

The funeral is one debt, but not the one that's slowing my steps on this wet windy road. Let me tell you that the

Inspector of Police in this place is a very great friend of mine, and that I owe him the sum of ten shillings. It was bail the last time, do you see? He always pays my bail, the Inspector, and I've always paid him back my next visit, though it stretches to a year or two. They speak of me here as an honest man. And here I am back again, and in my pocket a ha'penny short of ninepence. Ten shillings ! How can I face the Inspector ?

I'm thinking anyway that I'll better hurry for the funeral, and I'll better see quick about getting some money too. There's a big house on the left, just before the road drops and that terrible mist gets me. I wander over and peer at the stone gate-pillar. There it is, my own wanderer's mark, scratched on with my bread-knife five years ago. Things must still be the same, for none of our folks have altered my sign—a wheel with five spokes. That means—"Keep going !" This is a house where we're not encouraged. Had it been crossed swords now, swords set for a dance, it would have been all right. And better still had it been a line or two that looks like a boat, but is really a sodger's bonnet upside down. Money there, you see. A wheel ! But it's the last big place before the town, and no harm in a try.

A dog barks as I push the gate open. I'm not bothered. I reckon I'm something of an expert on dog-barks, like some people are on music. I can tell a dangerous bark, with a mastiff's throaty snarl behind it. I can tell the barking of a harmless thing, one that rubs himself against your legs when he's let out. The most of them are like that. This sounds like a spaniel to me. So I draw my coat—given to me by an Ayrshire minister six years ago—closer about me, and rap boldly on the front door.

Out comes the lady of the house herself—a big well-made dame, with a hard blue eye, and a voice and hair like brass.

"Well?" she snaps, when her blue eyes hit me.

My spiel is ready, and it's good. But this one will take a lot of melting.

"Don't waste my time, my man," says she. "I've no time for your kind. It's not food you want. It's money to drink. If I give you bread you'll simply throw it away at the roadside. I've seen it happen."

Honest, the tears are in my eyes as I try to persuade her. This foggy hole always rheums my eyes. I tell her about the funeral.

"Very well," she says, impatiently. "Wait a moment."

I waited hopefully, but my spirits go down when she comes back with a slice of bread, made up as a sandwich, and wrapped in tissue paper. But I thank her, stuff the bread in my pocket, and go out the gate. The dog is still barking.

I'm there just as they're carrying the coffin into the cemetery. There's maybe thirty of our folks there. They're draggled in the rain, which streaks the bare heads of the women and pooks the ragged tartan that holds the bairns to their backs.

It's gusty up there, as the minister man speaks his part, and the wind whips the rain from the bare branches, so that it falls about us like a shower of diamonds. It's soon over, and we all come forward, rather timidly, to seize a handful of the wet red clay and drop it upon the lowered coffin. Then we struggle from the cemetery, as the grave-diggers fill in the rest with great sweeping strokes of their shovels.

I feel out of place among those shiny massive tombstones of the townspeople. Perhaps there should be a special graveyard for us, away up on the hills, where we could mark our own graves with little sticks, and chuckie-stones, and flowers.

But now it's over, and I don't feel much like fraternizing

when I think of that eightpence ha'penny in my pocket, sixpence of which must go for a kip at Ned's place. The "model" costs a shilling.

There are not so many places like Ned's nowadays, and it's in a whole rotten old street that's being knocked down anyway. But they haven't knocked it down yet, because they can't decide whether it make a park, a square, or a hospital on the site.

Ned's kitchen is a low smoky joint, with a stone floor. There's a mist in it, same as outside, only this mist is made up of smoke from the wet sticks on the stove, steam from drying clothes (some of them wrapped round the stove-pipe), and human breath condensing on the frosty air. Not much of a place, but a little better than the town rubbish tip, where some of the real down-and-outers, biddy-drinkers and the rest, sleep under bushes in the warmth of the rotting refuse.

Cooking sausages on the stone is the man we call Paul Jones—a bully, with one eye and one leg. He is the boss. He has all the warmth and all the light, which isn't much. A black patch over his dead eye, and his crutches thrown on one side, he hops about with a queer up and down motion, like a short man riding a tall bicycle. Jones stands in the public park all day, so still that the birds come down from the trees and perch upon his shoulders and head and take crumbs from his hands and between his lips. I can see he's had a good day. He's been drinking and his temper is evil.

"Out of the way, you toothless old bastard!" he shouts to Pa, a quaint slobbering old individual who is trying to edge into the fire. He has taken off his socks and skips from one foot to the other, as in a weird unhappy dance. His face is pink and childish. Tufts of white hair stick out from his cheeks and his shining bald head like snowflakes driven against window panes. He grins foolishly,

and moves off mumbling something from his toothless gums. His feet leave wet prints on the floor.

"Dithering old idiot, you ought to be dead," snarls Paul Jones, cocking his one eye at the company. "And take your bloody daisy roots with you"—pitching the old fellow's broken boots after him.

There's a murmur from the others now that the big boss has had his say. He's prosperous . . . he's drawn a lot more than ten to-day . . . Billy is talking about fleas. Billy wears steel-rimmed specs, a round felt hat, and a dog collar, like a parson. He is very clever. He talks like a book, and usually everybody listens.

"Sheridan it was," declares Billy, "who said that if all the fleas in his bed had been unanimous, they could have kicked him out of it. When that day of unanimity comes, gentlemen—as come it must in this age of collective effort—I fear it will be a sorry one for us."

It seems as though Billy is prepared to talk for a long time on this subject, but Bob, him with the great scar from mouth to ear, chips in in his high sing-song whining voice with his usual tale. "There we were, my woman and me, just down into the little glen wi' the burn in it, and her wi' the fire lit, and drumming up the tea. But I said, 'No, I hear my mother, my old mother, calling me back to Inverness.' And so I went back, and travelled the way I came, and I was just in time for my mother's blessing before she died."

Bob wipes a tear. Billy turns to me.

"Been north?"

"Aye," says I.

"Ah, the crux of the matter, the kernel of the nut," starts Billy, like a rewound gramophone. "These phrases stir my memory to a winter three years ago when they dug a bus out of the snow-drifts on the Devil's Elbow—and found me in it. Seven days I spent there in comfort, a

lone human atom among the elements. Snug as a bug in a rug—or is that an unfortunate way of putting it?”

This is all very well, but that money business is hurting me like hell. Can I talk to those guys about money? God knows, they’ve got as little of it as I have. Billy there, with all his fine talk, where has he got to? You can hear Death in his cough. A bus in a snow-drift—that’s where they’ll find him some day, and he won’t be so snug. Dead in a ditch . . . and Pa, with his child’s face and poor wet feet. I shudder. I don’t know whether it’s the cold getting worse or something else. Still, Billy’ll talk about anything, even money . . . ten bob . . . so I tap him on the gelt question.

“What’s the best way of making money on the road nowadays, Billy?” I ask.

“Now you have introduced a difficult subject,” says Billy, wiping his glasses. “As a rule I do not let money trouble me. But a meeting of sorts—I have talked many an hour upon politics—”

“Something new, Billy, something new,” I croak.

“Well, the smart young tramp of to-day proceeds from newspaper office to newspaper office in the main towns upon his route. In each he must state that he is walking round the world for a wager. It is better to talk with a Colonial accent, and one must be prepared to describe exciting incidents, rescues, and so forth, met with on the way. If deficient in imagination one will find *The Pilgrim’s Progress* an excellent pocket companion, but one must be prepared to modernize the allegories.”

Billy checks, reflects—“In fact, it saves a lot of trouble if one simply stays at home and writes about it.”

I feel my heart breaking. And then the thought hits me. I think it’s when Paul Jones lobs his fry of sausages out of the pan on to a cracked plate with a border of daisies, and lobs in a couple of eggs. He takes the eggs from his

pocket, and I hear the coppers chinking. He's had a day all right. The thought hits me like a rock. I start counting how much there might be. Say a fair bit of silver in with the copper—there's toffs use the park—maybe ten or fifteen bob in each pocket. I can't just work it out . . . I need time . . . I keep Billy talking, and all the time I'm not really listening. I'm thinking.

"Ever cracked a bank, Billy?" I say, rubbing smoke out of my eyes.

"My dear fellow," says Billy, and he gives a tweak to his yellow scarf with the khaki darns in it, which flows like a beard from his dirty collar, "do I look as if I might? You see in me no apostle of violence. I am the mildest of men—a scholar of the roads, shall we say. Even as a child I was not robust. And I have my pride."

"Do you mean that pride would stop you from cracking a bank?" I ask.

"Yes," says Billy very patiently, "I could use bigger words than pride, but maybe you wouldn't understand them. Still, look at us—you, Bob, Pa, and me—we're still men, aren't we? We might courteously make a little request for help at a door we happened to pass upon the road, but now that we are arrived at our journey's end, which unhappily is only Ned's place, none of us would ask a thing. Pa there would like a sausage, I know. But will he ask?"

"Jones, Jones," I whisper, "you haven't talked about Jones."

"Ah, Mr. Jones." Billy is off again. His voice is like a background to my thinking. "Mr. Jones is fortunate. At the moment he is a prince among paupers. But wealth is only relative, my friend. Look at Jones. He has one leg and one eye. Do you envy his momentary accession of riches?"

Jones hears his name spoken. "Quiet there, you

tramps," he howls. "If you've anything to say about me say it to my face." He swings round, one hand still holding the frying-pan. "What the hell were you saying anyway? Too bloody much . . ."

God, and I was thinking about asking him. What had Billy said about pride? But old Pa has worked his way back again, and is near Jones' cooking pan.

Jones turns from us. "I've warned you!" he shouts, and seizing his crutch, swings it viciously while Pa drools and dances in front of him. I know the cruel power in that swinging crutch, and I jump in before it comes down. "Take it easy, Jones," I grunt as I push him back, and I know that one chance of the ten bob is gone. Jones chokes and curses, and his one eye skins me. But he's hungry too, and he snatches up his pan and his plate and limps out, "to eat his supper clear of a lot of interfering punch-drunk fools."

I take his place beside the fire. His jacket hangs over the chair. It clinks and I can see the bulge of coin. The greasy lining winks at me. "Careless Jones, careless, careless," I think that so hard that I nearly say it. I can't help it. I'm calculating which room Jones has gone to, how I can get along the passage and out to the street. Pa has fled—following the smell of the sausages, I suppose. Billy and Bob are safe. They got over the row quickly. They nod and moan as they fall into sleep. My fingers itch and tremble. I wonder if my eyes are out of control the same way—maybe sharp and keen, like a ferret's. Careless Jones . . . and then all my thinking stops. Queer how it hurts you, and gets all mixed up. I've got to relax. And when I stop thinking hard, the first thing I think quietly is—"What do I want it for anyway?" That's all. The fire is going down. It seems colder than ever now. I think about sleeping.

But I haven't eaten for a day—a long march is a hungry one—and I have still a sandwich in my pocket.

So I pull out the sandwich the woman gave me at the house marked with a wheel on the gate "Keep going". I split it up, thinking to toast one of the halves.

And then I nearly drop to the deck with the shock. For between the pieces of bread, just like another layer of margarine, is a ten bob note ! Stuffing the bread into my mouth with one hand, I wipe the note on my knees, fold it neatly, and put it carefully away in my pocket.

To-morrow I will pay the Inspector and take the road again. I'll be thinking then of clods falling on a coffin, and the next time I'll be back.

PETER DE POLNAY

KATE O'BRIEN (*Spectator*): "With Mr Peter de Polnay for sensitive and tactful guide, you can take an unusually interesting and agreeable journey—across the desert of Rio Negro to Southern Patagonia and all over the lonely physical scene of a great *estancia*.

"Mr de Polnay writes very well indeed. His manner is at once light and very strictly serious; it is dry without harshness; it can contain emotion without losing line or pace; there is no cheap smartness, but the mood is contemporary and is nicely adjusted between sentiment and scepticism. The author chooses his details of character, scene, and action, with so much care that he is able to give a full effect without sacrifice of economy.

"A book which is civilized, gentle, and adorned with many minor beauties and pleasures."

"TWO MIRRORS"

It was published on November 30: the first edition was heavily over-subscribed. A second impression is in hand and should be ready in January; the third is ordered. Reserve a copy *now*. 10s. net

Constable

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY.

HERBERT J. C. GRIERSON and J. C. SMITH. Chatto and Windus. 21s.

THIS BOOK IS the latest of a number of one-volume surveys, either of the whole field of English literature, or of some well-drawn furrow in that field. Professor B. Ifor Evans, Dr. Sampson, Messrs. Entwhistle and Gillett, and now a very well-known pair of scholars and editors have tried their hand at a necessarily unrewarding task. Unrewarding, because one can never be sure to what audience these surveys are directed. Obviously (and usefully) learners at a reasonably advanced stage make use of them, and I could this moment pencil off many paragraphs in the present "History" which students will be quoting to me (probably without acknowledgment) no further ahead than next June. But the writers admit to something more in mind: a true perspective of English poetry, a stimulus to understanding and appreciation. As to perspective, one does not invalidate the achievement of a book of this size by demurring from the authors' opinion on this poet or that, or even their omissions and insertions. Personally I like Crabbe very much, and am glad to see him get a chapter to himself, though I suspect that he doesn't deserve so much; I commend Scottish patriotism for giving Burns half as much space again as "Spenser, Sidney, and their Circle". I accept with a grain of salt the declaration of the Prefatory Note that "we shall dwell longest on the greatest poets". I even forgive the quotation of "the most charming lines in Pope's poetry" on pages 201-2, chilling though their effect must be upon the earnest inquirer. The authors will be prepared for a criticism of their last twenty pages, in which they show themselves out of charity with most contemporary verse, so I revert to the grand misconception,



*The National
Symphony Orchestra*

(conductor : SIDNEY BEER)

K1032/6 *Tchaikovsky* : SYMPHONY no. 5 in E Minor Op. 64

Automatic couplings available AK 01032-36 12" 4/- (purchase tax 2/7½)

on **Decca** records

the majestic error, the Classic Omission, with which their book opens.

"By nothing," said Matthew Arnold, and his words are quoted with approval on the dust jacket, "is England so great as by her poetry." But Arnold would be as surprised as we to find on page 1 of their text Sir Herbert and Dr. Smith balanced on a worm-eaten two-legged stool: "From these two worlds, the Mediterranean and the Germanic, our literature has sprung." And if at this point any reader asks, Well, what of it? then shame on my beard if I do not enlighten him—which was Heilyn's oath, the son of Gwynn, before he opened the door that looked on Cornwall and Aber Henfelyn, and the grief and burden of knowing their own past fell upon the men of the Island of Britain. The reference is to the story of Branwen, in the *Mabinogion*, and may remind those of us who need reminding that there was a third world, the Celtic, from which English literature has sprung, not less important than either of the others. But our authors' fault of omission must be ascribed to the invincible modesty of the Irish and more particularly the Welsh, who, the true repositories of the ancient traditions of these islands (and how ancient these are we are only now beginning to appreciate), the artists and scholars, the saints and the sages who kept learning alive during the first centuries of English occupation and converted the heathen; the main contributors to the "matter of Britain", the constant alleviators of the lumpish Teuton, and the enrichers, by inter-marriage with Angle, Saxon, Dane, and Norman, of the bloodstream of four "English" writers out of five, yet countenance by their indifference or pitying silence the worn-out and disproved assertions of the nineteenth century firm of Green and Freeman, Froude and Stubbs.

One characteristic of this substantial volume deserves a sentence or two; the "safeness" of its judgments. It is

The Debt

Formations of the R.A.F. in great strength crossed the coast last night to attack military objectives . . . mines were laid in enemy waters . . . nineteen bombers and seven fighters did not return.

The bulletin ends : imagination begins.

Those splendid lives, their loves, their hopes, their dreams, their years-to-be so freely risked, so freely lost, for our security.

You know the debt is unrepayable, but let your cheque book help the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund to go on caring for widow and orphan and hard hit dependents, rebuilding the future where no future seems to be. Never was its work so vital.

ROYAL AIR FORCE BENEVOLENT FUND

Please send donations to

LORD RIVERDALE, *Chairman*, or BERTRAM T. RUMBLE,
Hon. Sec., Appeals Committee, R.A.F. Benevolent Fund,
1 Sloane Street, London, S.W. 1. Cheques and P.O.
payable to R.A.F. Benevolent Fund.

(Registered under War Charities Act, 1940)

so easy to be unfair here, for after all most of us are agreed on the merits of the majority of English writers, if we have any taste and knowledge at all. It is not a sign of easy judgment to like both Pope and Wordsworth, both Milton and Tennyson, to say nothing of the moderns. But it is not particularly stimulating to read in short compass verdicts (for this is a critical History) with which we are almost certain to concur. Thus the most stimulating survey of literature to appear in the last ten years is surely Ford Madox Ford's *The March of Literature*. Ford was oftentimes outrageously wrong, not only in matters of taste, but of fact; but he drank falernian where Sir Herbert nods approval, he slipped in a rabbit punch where Dr. Smith holds up a warning finger. He enjoyed, he loved, he hated, he despised, and he sent me running round my shelves. There is little of this in the present volume. There is much excellent information and a wealth of good orthodox criticism instead.

GWYN JONES

L'ARCHE 3. 14 Rue Michlet, Alger.

FONTAINE. 33, 34.

RENAISSANCES. 2-5. 4 Rue Bourlon, Alger.

LE NEF. 1.

FOR ALL THE brave words about liberation few books and hardly any magazines or newspapers reach us from France. It makes difficult a review of the scanty material available because we have no means of knowing how our few chance items fit into the sphere of contemporary French thought. I feel myself that *L'Arche* has the most vitality but this may be due to its inclusion of sections from Gide's dairy. One thing is obvious: the superiority of Gide's mind. Others see the war as defeat being the equivalent of punishment. He, alone of them all, thinks in

"He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him . . ."



Who that ever read the tale of The Prodigal Son failed to remember it? There is much philosophy in Books, taking the road of reason step by step ; but the story-teller has a still surer way with us. Lessons well taught are those one likes to remember.

No literature, no book, was ever so well-knit as the New Testament ; no library ever richer than the Bible. Fine

literature it may be, but this goes for nothing if we do not make it so by fair reading. Are we to be shy, ignorant, afraid? It is sober fact that what we cherish as civilization is built upon it. "Reading maketh a full man" — Shall we accept a Sunday ration? No feast is richer than the Bible.

ISSUED BY BOOK TOKENS LIMITED

universal terms and his thought is as valuable to us or to any nation as to his own. Otherwise I get the impression of immense rivalry between many little groups, most of whom are saying the same thing but who would die rather than express it except in the terms of a philosophy invented by themselves.

Fontaine is always readable and contains many interesting articles. It continues a good tradition but—and this is strange—Alger is stamped on it, not Paris. It reminds me of the flourishing magazines that spring up in the “new world” among small, intensely enthusiastic literary groups, with the balance divided between work of an almost academic character and those re-valuations of literature that are the delight of the aspirant to letters. This is no condemnation—its work is valuable but it has not the character of some old Paris reviews.

The first number of *Le Nef* contains an interesting extract from a further instalment of Julien Green's diary, an article on him by René Micha, studies on the position of France in the world to-day, and some *Souvenirs des Deux Zones* by Aron. *Renaissances* is political. Perhaps the articles on the Breton problem, the situation in Alsace, and the colonial empire are more interesting to English readers than its number on Germany but my prevalent impression after reading all these magazines is that it is impossible to review them adequately so long as so little information is available as to French thought and feeling as a whole. Naturally English readers should take every opportunity of reading any French magazines available, but we have not as yet the material to consider them other than piecemeal. None of the magazines seem to show any understanding of war-time England, but that again is probably due to lack of information. The solution is to restore normal postal services and the exchange of books as soon as possible.

BRYHER

ARE YOU 'NEW' TO FALSE TEETH?

Gain CONFIDENCE & COMFORT this way

However great the dentist's skill, your mouth probably feels "full of teeth." During this difficult initial period, gain confidence by sprinkling KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE on the contact surface of the dental plate. This tasteless powder—harmless to denture and user—will hold your plate firmly yet comfortably in correct position and will help you to masticate food properly. Dentists recommend it. From all chemists—1/3 & 3/3.

KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE

Also, use Kolynos Denture Powder
for cleaning false teeth—1/3

INDIGESTION



The Doctor's Prescription

150 years ago Dr. Jenner, of Vaccination fame, first prescribed the treatment for Indigestion, which Doctors in increasing numbers have since prescribed for their patients.

This proved specific for the quick relief of Acid Stomach and other Digestive Disorders can be obtained from Chemists everywhere.

Prices 1/5 and 3/4 $\frac{1}{2}$, or send 1d. stamp for helpful Literature and Sample of "Dr. Jenner's Absorbent Lozenges" in handy pocket-case.

SAVORY & MOORE Ltd. (Dept. A.L.),
143 New Bond Street, London, W.1

TO KEEP ABREAST WITH TO-DAY'S BOOKS, COME TO

**B
O
O
K
S**

LONDON'S BRIGHTEST BOOKSHOP

You can ALWAYS see them in profusion here.

Engravers and Diestampers; Exclusive Notepapers; Visiting Cards
for Official and Professional use engraved promptly and accurately.

Only a few minutes from Piccadilly.

TRUSLOVE & HANSON

14a CLIFFORD STREET (New Bond Street), W.1.

**B
O
O
K
S**

WANTED MODERN BOOKS

CHILDREN'S
ENCYCLOPAEDIA
(10 Vols.)

ENCYCLOPAEDIA
BRITANNICA
(14th Edition)

SETS, etc.

HIGH PRICES PAID

ROBERT CHRIS, 8 Cecil Court, LONDON, W.C.2
TEMPLE BAR 6700

THE SHRIMP AND THE ANEMONE. L. P. HARTLEY.
Putnam. 8s. 6d.

PHILISTINES ABOUND EVEN NOW, but at the time this story begins, some thirty-five to forty years ago, they were possibly even more numerous. Or so it seems to one who can clearly remember the sort of life in an English seaside town that Mr. Hartley describes in the *Shrimp and the Anemone*. At any rate Eustace was surrounded by them.

For the moral of this touching little story is contained in the allegory which begins it. A delicate boy of between nine and ten, playing by a rock pool, discovers a shrimp being eaten, or rather absorbed by an anemone. Incapable of beholding or contributing to pain, he summons his sister's help. With brutal directness, she tears away the victim only to find that it is dead, and that in the process she has disembowelled the anemone. It is a sad commentary that in this predatory world existence seems impossible without involving the destruction of some other living thing, and yet it is a reality with which Eustace has to reckon, and which in his Eden-like state he is incapable of understanding, for

"His mind had no power to consider any unmixed evil, it was set upon happiness. With Hilda's ruthless recognition of an evil principle at the back of the anemone affair his tears started afresh."

As the story develops the character of Eustace is woven into his inner, spiritual life. It is a strange and persuasive mixture. Constitutionally frail and intellectually precocious, morally weak and spiritually impressionable, the ingredients of his nature are foreign to his surroundings. By temperament shrinking, generous, chivalrous, and emotional, yet not deeply feeling, he is destined, with his charming manners and serious air, to be dominated by stronger natures than his own, and from which there is no escape.

BOOKS and LIFE

Fleming, C. M.	Social Psychology of Education	7/6
Beveridge, Sir W.	Full Employment	12/6
Bibby, Cyril	Sex Education	7/6
Pearce & Crocker	Peckham Experiment	12/6
Smellie, K. B.	Our Two Democracies at Work	6/-
	Ourselves in Wartime—Home Front Pictures	7/6

JOHN & EDWARD BUMPUS, LTD.

Booksellers to His Majesty The King

477 OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1

Mayfair 3601

TRANSFORMATION 2

Edited by STEFAN SCHIMANSKI and HENRY TREECE

"*Transformation Two* is an important volume for my readers. Here was something that I had long been looking for, a collection of essays by writers . . . who all believe in the individual personality and their purpose is to see how that personality can be maintained and society at the same time adequately served. The range of their topics and their treatment is admirable."

B. IFOR EVANS (*John O' London's*).

8s. 6d.

A MAP OF HEARTS

A Collection of Short Stories (now out of print but reprinting)

Edited by STEFAN SCHIMANSKI and HENRY TREECE

The book is divided into three sections, stories of the war, imaginative sketches and tales of conscience. The writers include William Sansom, Mulk Raj Anand, J. F. Hendry, John Pudney, Inez Holden, Gwyn Jones, and fifteen others. *Wrapper designed by Henry Moore.*

8s. 6d.

Lindsay Drummond Ltd., 6 Buckingham St., W.C.2

His surroundings are depressingly ordinary. He is loved and cared for by his family with the perfunctory kindness of the unimaginative. This much we see in the commonplace father, the nagging aunt, and the possessive sister whose will-power governs his childhood. Sometimes he rebels, and tries to run away from Fate, but Fate always catches him, does him up in a neat little parcel, and places him back in the family pigeon hole to await her own delivery. One day it comes in the form of Miss Fothergill, one of those terrifying invalids who, densely veiled, perambulate every sea-front in bath chairs. And Miss Fothergill becomes the source of his spiritual affluence. It falls to her to open the windows for Eustace and show him the prospect that he had only dimly apprehended : instinctively she understands his needs. That she should die while he sits holding her deformed hand in his own, a thought which formerly would have filled him with terror is the price he is prepared to pay in return for her radiant benefactions, and he knows that the price has not been too high .

The chief virtue of Mr. Hartley's book, its whole virtue it should be explained, lies in the remarkable and subtle study of the personality of this engaging child.

YVONNE FRENCH

AIRBORNE FORCES SECURITY FUND

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

MOST units of the fighting forces have Benevolent Funds and organizations, to safeguard the welfare of their men and their families, and a fund for Airborne Troops—a new branch of the Army—has been founded.

Airborne Troops are composed of picked men from every regiment in the Army, who have volunteered for airborne service. These men recognize the risk they are facing, but they have one anxiety—what of their families and dependants?

It is to relieve this anxiety—and to enable these men to go into battle with their minds at ease on this point—that the Airborne Forces Security Fund has been established. It was founded by those who realized the necessity to provide immediate aid to Airborne Troops and their dependants—in the form of advice, money, and goods—in the event of distress or hardship not otherwise provided for. Already over 3,400 claims for financial help and more than 2,700 cases of distress other than financial have been dealt with by the Fund.

The response already received to appeals for donations to this Fund shows that the need for the Fund is appreciated and it is hoped that generous contributions will be made. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Airborne Forces Security Fund, 70 Eaton Place, London, S.W. 1.

Patrons:

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR JOHN DILL, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel
Commandant, Parachute Regiment.

ADMIRAL THE LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN, G.C.V.O., D.S.O., A.D.C.,
Supreme Commander, S.E. Asia

LIEUT.-GENERAL F. A. M. BROWNING, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Com-
mander 1st Allied Airborne Army.

Trustees:

LIEUT.-GENERAL F. A. M. BROWNING, C.B., D.S.O., <i>Chairman.</i>	
HARVEY BOWRING	MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOCELYN
CHARLES H. CRABTREE	PERCY, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
BRIGADIER The Hon. H. K. M.	MAJOR-GENERAL THE LORD
KINDERSLEY, M.B.E., M.C.	RENNELL OF RODD, K.B.E., C.B.
HERMAN LEBUS, C.B.E., J.P.	BRIGADIER A. G. WALCH, O.B.E.
CAPTAIN J. M. PEARSON	

Founder and Hon. Secretary: CAPTAIN J. M. PEARSON

Hon. Treasurer: MAJOR the Hon. PATRICK C. KINNAIRD, M.C.
(Barclay's Bank, Limited, 1 Pall Mall, London, S.W. 1.)

(This space is presented by The Brendin Publishing Co., Ltd.)